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NOVEMBER 1967

Prabuddha Bharata

**OR
AWAKENED INDIA**



**By Karma, Jnana, Bhakti, and Yoga, by one or more or
all of these the vision of the Paramatman is obtained.**

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NOVEMBER 1967

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PRABUDDHA BHARATA

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उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत

Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—:0:—

LETTERS OF SWAMI SHIVANANDA

(131 .)

Sri Ramakrishna Math
Belur, Howrah
21 June 1923

Dear Sriman —,

I could learn all from your letter. Do not be restless. Continue to hold fast to your practice of *japa* and meditation according to your might as before. The mind which has so long remained attached to the enjoyments of the world cannot be controlled forthwith and made Godward. But slowly as you repeat your *japa* and pray to Him earnestly, it will certainly turn towards Him in due course. Know it for certain that He, through His grace, makes impossible things possible. The Master is the incarnation of God and the spiritual guide of this age. He is the indwelling Self of all. The heart becomes illumined as one meditates on Him there. You, too, will experience the same. I do vouchsafe its certainty. Never He rejects anybody. One who desires Him gets Him. You, too, will attain to Him.

Never be disheartened under any circumstance. Since you happen to be here, your heart's desire will, doubtless, be fulfilled. There is nothing to worry. The mind by nature is unsteady. It will have to be controlled by the strength of prayer and chanting of His holy name. How various are the old bad tendencies that are there in the mind from the past ! Through prayer and *japa* all these will have to be made weak and powerless. Do not be

afraid, you will succeed. Keep the company of holy men as much as you can and stay away from bad company as far as possible.

My heartfelt love and blessings to you. Write letters to me occasionally.

Your well-wisher,
Shivananda

(132)

Nilgiri, Madras
May 1925

Dear Daughter —,

I am very happy to receive your letter. There is no harm if you are late in writing letters. Write as and when you find your opportunity. There will be no wrong for you in doing this. Certainly do I pray so that you may develop faith, devotion and compassion. I do pray to the Master for the faith, devotion and compassion of one whom I have once placed at His lotus feet. Know this for certain. Certainly you are pure and simple-hearted—I have no doubt about it. Pray to Him with the heart of a little child and ask for the faith, purity and simplicity. Surely He will give those to you. He is the kindest of the kind, purest of the pure and the most compassionate of the compassionate and He loves His devotees much. It is for the sake of the devotees that He incarnates Himself in human form. Take it for certain that He has much love for you.

Attend the sessions regularly. I am much delighted to learn that Khoka Maharaj (Swami Subodhananda) could give you great joy by his visit. It is pleasing to know that you read books about the Master and Swamiji. Do it regularly. I am well. Have my heartfelt love and blessing to you. You have not written anything about your health. Be mindful about it. Never ignore it.

Your well-wisher,
Shivananda

THE VOW OF MAKING FOOD PLENTIFUL

[EDITORIAL]

Food and the Vows of the Past: Food is a sacred and vital necessity. Hence came the command: 'His vow is that he should make food plentiful'. This instruction with regard to food is no dictum of any modern economics, popularized and publicized by the champions of modern five-year plans through press or platform. Neither is it a new phrase that has just been coined in the wake of the acute food shortage sweeping over the countries of the Middle East and the Far East. Long before Malthus foresaw the applicability of his theory of population explosion and the consequent food crisis, the sages of the Upaniṣads of India indicated in no uncertain terms the importance of food as the first condition of human living, physical as well as mental and envisioned its inalienable functional relationship leading towards the realization of the Supreme and Subtle Brahman, the eternal objective of the human soul. The conviction of immortality could not be any easy formula of words. It could come only as the culminating reward of an arduous seeking. The spiritual world of the Upanisadic sages was never a floating and rootless metaphysics divorced from the realities of hunger and thirst. It was rather a mighty imagination which called into effect the entire horizon of human existence, both relative and absolute and made its sights and sounds familiar to the eye and ear of the mind. It started with the gross empirical and ended into the subtle transcendental. It accepted all, rejected none and transcended everything. It was Brahman through and through. So the Upaniṣad says, '*annam Brahmeti vyaiānat*—He realized food as Brahman.' (*Taittirīya*, III. ii. 1) The sage of the *Taittirīya*

Upaniṣad, by way of instructions to his disciple about the wisdoms to be followed with regard to food, mentions of three vows which the latter realized through the practice of penance. The vows are the following:

1. '*Annam na nindyāt. Tadvratam*—His vow is that, he should not deprecate food';

2. '*Annam na paricakṣita. Tadvratam*—His vow is that, he should not discard food';

3. '*Annam bahukurvita. Tadvratam*—His vow is that, he should make food plentiful'.

These sacred vows, although outlined by way of spiritual instructions, embody in them no mean wisdom of economic planning which dominates our thought on food today. Tragically enough, the land which once formulated such lofty vows dealing with the problems and possibilities of practical life, has been plunged into a long spell of chronic and recurring food crisis. The descendants of those sages, bewildered and aimless as they are today before the new food situations, do hardly recall the saving grace of those ancient instructions of the past. The recurring blasts of famines and failures of crops have shattered the economic foundation of India to its depths and eaten into its very vitality. These threaten the unity of the nation pushing its hungry and half-fed masses into desperate lawlessness and put its entire heritage and culture on trial. It is no use speculating over the optimism of any hollow future. To make the modest of the statements the food shortage of India may be aptly compared to a rheumatism that moves from one end of the body-politic of the country to

another. Today you drive it from West Bengal tomorrow it crops up in Madras. No sooner had a famine been controlled in the South than a drought began in the North. People, particularly the masses, are in fact getting accustomed to starvations and official statements of the Government such as 'It is not a localized problem', 'It is the suffering of the Indian people' and others issued from time to time have become a permanent feature in this country for the last two decades or more. And all these have brought in their train a general scepticism among the masses about our national future and bred senseless frustration and contempt with regard to everything Indian. So even after twenty years of independence and national panning people ask one another whether there will be a break-through or a break-up. India's entire future swings on a very slender balance—the food for the people.

Magnitude of the problem: Food crisis in India has, in fact, come to appear as an international problem. In the message to the U. S. Congress on additional food aid to India in March 30, 1966 the U.S. President said, 'Indian leaders have rightly turned to the world for help. Pope Paul has endorsed their plea. So has the World Council of Churches. So has the Secretary General of the United Nations. So has the Director General of the Food and Agriculture Organization. And so in this message, does the President of the United States... India's need is for at least 11 to 12 million tons of imported grain from January to December 1966 ... And I urge the strong and generous response of governments and people the world around.' Food imports have gone up from 600,000 tons in 1955 to 10 million tons in 1966-67 and the import needs of the current year may be in the neighbourhood of 15 million tons. 'This sky-rocketing of food

imports', as one of India's noted economists would say, 'cannot be explained by bad monsoons. It cannot be argued that we have had bad monsoons throughout the past ten years. They reflect the sheer inability of the farms to produce food because of capital decay.' To meet the crisis last year urgent shipments of food from U.S.A., Canada, Australia, U.S.S.R. and other countries of the World small and big had to be rushed towards us in quick succession. Since the time, these 500 million people of India have virtually been living on a *ship-to-kitchen* basis—a fact which has been admitted even by the Food Corporation of India itself. Yet the quantum of these imports, aids, gifts and concessions on food did not suffice to make the minimum supply of food to every average person who had to go on with a diet much below the subsistence level for a considerable period of the year. Quite in keeping with the traditional pattern of nutritions in this country the minimum supply of cereals as food should not fall short of 16oz. per adult per day under any situation. But in the areas of the country where statutory and modified systems of food rationing prevailed one who did not violate the existing laws had to carry on with a meagre quota which was at times less than 10oz. and this under-diet quota of food grains was prescribed by one of the most responsible agencies of the Government, the Planning Commission. Food shortage in India, as has been reviewed by many a competent thinker of this country and abroad, is a deep seated one. It is not a crisis which could be taken to have developed from any temporary imbalance in economy such as the 'scissors crisis' that once threw the Soviet economic system out of gear. Nor can it be taken to be one of those unforeseen national calamities that are comparable to the economic crises such as the

Great Depression of U.S.A. in 1929 and the like. Crises of the types mentioned above are short-lived ones growing mainly out of the maladjustments of the factors of production in a developmental planning out to experiment on non-conventional lines. Food crisis in India, on the other hand, is due neither to any temporary short fall in production nor to any imbalance which remains inexplicable with regard to any plan structure of any economic system. It was always predictable and it gathered its present devastating momentum slowly and steadily. It arose out of an unplanned agriculture and ill-planned industry where one could hardly find any rapport between the plan and the progress in real terms. Agriculture has all along been neglected in this country and the conditions did not improve during the last three plans. Even before the Second World War average daily per capita calorie consumption in India ran from 1800 to 2100 although the minimum intake for every human body requires it to be 2550 to 2650 calories daily. (*vide*, Dummier, Heflebower and Norman: *Economics with Applications to Agriculture*, McGraw-Hill, pp. 96-97) And this intake only dwindled further down during the last two decades of India's economic planning. No doubt, there has been a rising trend in the growth of population in this country requiring more quantities of food to feed the added mouths. India's population growth which averaged 2.1 per cent during 1950-1965 came up to 2.4 per cent by 1964 and the total population which was 487 million in 1965 has now reached the figure of 500 million. It may double by 1991 when the total will be 975 million. The problem can assume an alarming proportion if we fail to take the necessary measures to curb the trend. But did we, in the meanwhile, find ways to extend the cul-

tivation of food crops over the millions of acres of land still lying fallow, barren and unused in this country? Did we go round the country with determined efforts to grow more food right here instead of going round the world for food aid? There is no short cut to greatness or great achievements. Every prosperity has a price and every nation aspiring after such prosperity has to pay for it. While our planners busied themselves in defining ambitious targets and wishful objectives in the sectors of industrial development, the food front which was our basic concern as well as our basic industry, continued to remain vulnerable and a source for world pity as ever. As a result, we achieved neither self sufficiency in food nor self confidence in industries. Indian economy continued to be an aided economy—a structure fed by imported food and proped by foreign finance.

Food shortage in India is not therefore an isolated event that has cropped up all of a sudden like a flood or a cyclone. It is the part of a general economic crisis spreading over the entire body-politic of India. The immoderate rise in general price structure, the mounting incidence of per capita tax burden, stagnation in exports, inequitable distribution of the gross national income, indiscriminate imports, and the swelling burden of foreign loans secured through borrowing and begging—are the factors that make the economic failure all the more perceptible. It has been officially admitted that the wholesale prices which registered an increase of 28 per cent during 1955-56 with 1950-51 as the base year, showed further increase of 58 per cent between 1955 and 1966. In other words the prices, compared to 1951 level, have gone up by 75 per cent roughly during these years. The purchasing power of a rupee has therefore correspondingly gone down to one-fourth of what

it commanded in 1950-51. One unofficial study in 1966 which converted the per capita currencies of different countries of the World into U. S. dollar equivalent at official rates of exchange found India to be the poorest of all the poor countries of the World. The study made by Dr. Franz Pick of New York, U.S.A. took countries with 100 dollar per capita as wealthy and 20 dollar as poor. The hierarchy of the poor countries in that calculation appeared as the following: East Germany 19.99, Morocco 17.78, U. A. R. 17, Turkey 15.64, Philipines 14.83, Iran 12.73, Vietnam 12.52, Honduras 11.69, Pakistan 6.32 and India 6.28. (*Vide, Statesman* July 10, 1966) Per capita burden of foreign debts till the end of 1965 stood at Rs. 90 and per capita burden of gross taxation during 1965-66 at Rs. 50. To quote the report of the Mahalanobis Committee which was commissioned in 1960-61, 1 per cent of the total population appropriated 28 per cent of the gross national income and controlled 46 per cent of the total national wealth of the country. These factors have made the current economic crisis even more acute and appalling and thrown the nation into the midst of a dismal debacle. The contempt, the superciliousness, the sarcasm or the irony with which the foreigners look to us today all spring from this objective fact of our economic failure. We all feel and look small before the eyes of the world.

Repercussions on the Masses: The impact of this food crisis and economic failure upon the masses has been dangerous. Hungry men everywhere as we know are the angry men and frustration always ends up in desperation. And the picture cannot be different in the Indian perspective. Burke once said, 'Tell me what are the prevailing sentiments that occupy the minds of your young men, and I will tell you what is to be the character of the next genera-

tion.' Following the remark of Burke one can say that the prevailing sense of frustration among the masses of India has pushed them to take up lawlessness, indiscipline and violence as their chosen slogans everywhere. This lawlessness originating in the food front has come to disrupt the entire order of social, educational, industrial and political relations of the people. Between one State and another, between teachers and students, employers and employees, traders and customers, it is being nurtured and fomented by various interested parties who are prone to fish in troubled waters. The *gherāos*, *bunds* and *hartāls*; the *dharnās*, strikes, and shouts; the people's courts, peasants' fronts and lootings are only its many colours and shades. It has encouraged industrial indiscipline, looting of food grains, squatting on the railway lines and let loose the forces of disintegration all over India. Even the members of the Parliament and the legislators of laws do not hesitate to take recourse to this lawlessness in the form of *dharnā* as they try to redress their grievances against the Government. Describing this present economic crisis Mr. J. R. D. Tata in one of his recent remarks observed, 'While millions of our people in various parts of the country and particularly in Bihar, suffered grievous hardships as a result of the failure of the two successive monsoons and of the continued inflationary rise in prices, large sectors of the industry have been seriously affected by a significant recession in demand and mounting costs on the one hand, a virtual collapse of the industrial discipline and in many instances of law and order on the other.' Instances are not wanting where under the pretext of the democratic rights of the people mob rule has been allowed to prevail, regional fanaticism and linguistic jingoism have been applauded and even secession of the relations of States from

the Centre has been advocated. Do our leaders in administration look to these retrograde and disintegrating forces that are slowly creeping in here and there in this country under the guise of economic grievances and threatening the unity of the nation? Have they become forgetful of the lessons of the past while they continue to pin their faith in their own pet isms and speak in their own cants and thus gamble with the weal and woe of these 500 million people? Posterity may perhaps overlook many of the knaveries and failures of our present generation but it will never excuse us if we allow our hard earned unity to become lost in the tumult of these new crimes and the huddle of the confusions. Let us not forget the grim fact of history that India was once overrun and conquered not by any formidable foreign power but by only a joint stock company of foreign traders who although came here for trade and commerce, found the people of this vast subcontinent divided against themselves on many purposes.

Food and the Future of India: Food is therefore the dominant cry of India today. Nothing is more important to a common man in India today than a morsel of food. It is the irony of fate that 'bread should be so dear' to them and 'flesh and blood so cheap'. Therefore, if they have responded to the call of lawlessness, it is due to their aimlessness caused by hunger and despair. If they have developed distrust against culture and heritage, it is due to the want of food and their poverty. Completely exhausted by the persistent calamities of the years through which they have passed, they now yield to any power which promises them some repose. There is, indeed, a degree of suffering which unmans them and makes them amoral. So this abominable failure to secure food that makes India meanly truckle to the

caprice and punctilio of other surplus nations, demands the most decisive indignation and effectual enquiry. The principles which do not recreate our basic economy so important to our honour, integrity and existence as a nation, deserve the indelible stigma of every public abhorrence.

Neglect of the masses has been the national sin of India and by neglecting food we have only added to that burden of sin. Swami Vivekananda in his many speeches and writings made poignant references on this very fact. He said, 'I consider that the great national sin is the neglect of the masses, and that is one of the causes of our down fall. No amount of politics would be of any avail until the masses in India are once more well educated, well fed and well cared for.' 'Bread! Bread! I do not believe in a God who cannot give me bread here, giving me eternal bliss in heaven! Pooh!. India is to be raised, the poor are to be fed, education is to be spread and the evil of priest craft is to be removed... More bread, more opportunity for every body! ...' (*The Complete Works*, Vol. V, pp. 222-223 and 381) To give food to hungry millions is the primary religion of India today; to exert for the economic regeneration of the people is its supreme spiritualism. 'First bread and then religion... No dogmas will satisfy the cravings of hunger.' (*ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 432) By this religion of giving food to those who are starving we must expiate our national sins, past and present. By our determined endeavours for the economic prosperity of the nation we must renew the dignity of our spiritual heritage. And the responsibility of this renewal devolves not upon any particular group, government or organization but upon each and every person who claims to be truly Indian. It calls upon the united powers of the State to do away

with this awful crisis which not only evokes the contempt of the world but also contaminates our national morals, complicates our integrity and ruins our every future. Those who today ask us to reject our spiritual traditions for the sake of food, are only victims of obsession and gloom. They are lured by a popular El Dorado which is misleading and motivated. Spiritualism of India always upheld the

basic claims of the material needs of life. It is the ancient scripture of India that once signified food as the first born one who said, 'I food as I am, eat him up who eats food without offering.' (*Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, III. x. 5-6) It is the resolve of the past which makes one realize and aver: 'His vow is that he should make food plentiful.' And it is this sacred vow of the past that can save our souls today.

WHEN TO WRITE AND WHEN NOT TO WRITE

MR. ERNEST BRIGGS

One of the hardest things that a young writer has to learn is the Law of Periodicity—that there are times when he must concentrate all his powers upon his creative work, and intervening times in which he must abstain from any such work. Both of these periods are of short duration, and they are alternating. Intensive work must be followed by complete rest for revitalization of creative power, complete rest by ebullient resurgence.

This Law of Periodicity, is a fundamental law of the whole world of Nature, and yet man who is surrounded by evidences of its continual manifestation, comes to it tardily, or mostly never comes to appreciate it at all.

The most persistent temptation that impedes a young writer, and one that has been the undoing of even writers of considerable talent, is the widespread illusion that youth, passion, dream, labour, love, and even life, itself can be compelled by resolute effort to keep a golden height

Day after happy day,

Night after night.

It is this illusion that so often spurs a young writer in an effort to maintain not

only an evenness of intensity, but a continuity of uniform production week after week, in season and out of season, year after year, for he does not realize that for every outpouring of power there must be a proportionate time for revitalization, the successive alternation making for a longer and more vivid rhythm than the alternation of day and night, the divinely ordered succession of labour and rest, naturally ordained by the rising and setting of the sun.

How rarely is this lesson of labour and rest learned even in the common round of daily living, let alone on the mental and spiritual planes of life where its faithful application is of even greater importance. How hardly does one come to a realization of this law, even in physical living, where

The heart must pause to breathe,

And love itself have rest,

and in which the imputed coldness of a lover does not mean that there is a loss of love, but merely that love is quiescent, intensifying for greater fullness of expression.

All things by their fundamental harmony work together for good, and the fullest

wisdom that can beacon life here and now is that which is expressed by Edward Carpenter in the phrase, 'To hold by leaving, to take by letting go; leaving and again leaving the surface of things, so that we take the heart of them along with us.'

The Law of Periodicity is an Eternal Law that underlies and stabilizes all genetic power; all creation; that shapes, sustains, and relinquishes all things that are visible or invisible within the cosmic universe. In the words of Walter Pater, 'Every moment some form grows perfect in hand or face; some tone on the hills or the sea is choicer than the rest; some mood of passion or insight of intellectual excitement is irresistibly real and attractive for that moment only.'

Poetry is the immortalization in words of these significant moments of revelation, which by the very nature of their intensity cannot ordinarily be sustained in time beyond their passionate duration of their natural fruition, but it is for the glory of the poet that through the magic of his mastery of words that he is able to endow them with timelessness, and so they live in beauty in his rhyme. It is in the intensity of these ecstatic moments that a poet should sing; lacking their intensity he should preserve silence.

Without the quickening of vision and intensity words are only words. By un-deviating observance of these moments, and by the Law of Periodicity, which is an essential factor of their manifestation, a gifted writer not only maintains his full vigour of creative impulsion, but he is actually able to increase his susceptibility to it, so that his work becomes better and better, for in what we provisionally describe as genius, the personal surrender to the persuasive mood is so complete that when it is fully and faithfully experienced, successive peaks recur at shorter and shorter intervals as the rate of perception

is elevated, so that to the casual observer the recurrence of peaks may seem to be so rapid that an illusion of unbroken continuity is created as the peaks and intervals are absorbed in speeding cycles, as the spokes of a turning wheel may seem to relinquish individual identity by rapidity of revolution. The all-important point is that even in rapid succession, these peaks are recurrent, and that their intervals though brief in time, are still rigidly differentiated by the Law of Rhythm.

Fortunate is the young writer who is able to accept early the unconscionable stricture of the physical in its fundamental coarseness and ferocity, the inhumanity of man to man, and the mire and blood of human veins, and to balance his acceptance with the knowledge of this Divine Law of Directed Economy that controls the humblest of all manifestations as well as the most elevated of the mind and spirit, for this knowledge will enable him to sustain the vigour of the unappeasable mind to an extent undreamed of by those who are ignorant of its specific power, for the resultant harmonization will bring all his outward things into peace with those within, so that his richest power will be spent in expressiveness and not vitiated by restlessness and undue prodigality.

The faithful writer will know quite clearly when the right season for intensive work has arrived, because of its deep impulsion and its individual characteristics, not the least of which is an exalted simplicity that is inseparable from the high periods of inspiration. His inner consciousness will learn to recognize the seasons of the soul, even as his outer eyes appraise the seasons of the year by their flowers, their vistas, and their birds. One indication of the rightful utterance of a poet in his true perception of a fruitful season will be found in the sense of inevitability that will characterize the opening

line of his verse, so that the initial line itself may be a positive witness to the transcendental utterance that is truest poetry—'Sweet day, so calm, so cool, so bright'....'The glories of our blood and state'....'My soul, there is a country far beyond the stars'....'Shall I compare thee to a summer's day? Thou art more lovely, and more temperate'....'That is no country for old men'....'Sunset, and evening star, and one clear call for me'.. 'Euclid alone has looked on Beauty bare'....and so on, through the whole range of that great heritage that is the living glory of the English tongue.

If a person is to be a poet, he will, in early childhood, prompted by the immortal whisperers who constantly companion him, have assailed an invisible gate and found world-wonder there, he shall have seen a shining image or have heard a voice that shall become the transforming master of his days and years, even to death. If he has been in this wise thoroughly convinced of his calling, and if he is sufficiently humble, he will do well to make a beginning, imitatively, as children do in learning natural speech; by taking for pattern and inspiration the achievement of a writer who has been raised to greatness by the constancy of his service to a high ideal, the clarity of his vision, and by the completeness of his personal surrender to the divinely engendered sources of his inspiration, and by his courageous endurance of all vicissitudes, to a point at which he has been elevated to the stature of his peers, so that he appears to those who have the capacity to appreciate his work as the form of a sage of old Byzantium might appear in the vivid expression of William Butler Yeats, 'within the gold mosaic of a wall'.

It is inevitable that the voice of a young poet should at first be highly derivative, but the important thing is that

the model should be of surpassing elevation. To again quote from Yeats, the greatest master of his generation:

Nor is there singing school but studying
Monuments of its own magnificence.

The young writer will thus serve a high apprenticeship, but the important thing that he must learn at this time is that he must not inflict his imitativeness upon the world at large, but that he must conscientiously destroy everything until he discovers with delight that after long pondering, long apprenticeship, he has achieved his own peculiarly personal style that through progressive understanding and patient polishing he shapes towards consummate craftsmanship——
The life so short; the craft so long to learn!

Slowness is beauty,
Take it to your heart,
The weary fingers and the jaded will
Along build up the changeless work of art;
Slowness is Beauty still....
Slowness is Beauty,
This is God's own plan;
Go to your labour then, without regret,
To build a universe or mould a man,
Slowness is Beauty yet.

Those words, from my volume 'The Secret Listener', of 1942, are still significant.

By fidelity to the appointed task, by diligent exhaustion of the recurring impulsion of inspiration, by lucid tempering of expression, by trial and error, by aspiration, and by perspiration, by persistence and by achievement, by much writing and much initial destruction of writing, the poet in embryo will become a practising writer—a conscientious craftsman, and then, if his apprenticeship has been worthy of the high nobility of his calling, he will become an artist whose spirit is visited at shorter and shorter intervals by a swift commanding presence

withdrawal from the gadding crowd, and assiduously cultivate a constant reparation of spirit to offset the vitiation of the material world, and all that would stun his perceptive faculties. Strict attendance to these lesser matters is as much a part of the poet's craft as actual creative writing, for should he be negligent in these the spontaneity of his creative song will surely suffer. All considerable poets have known that Poetry is written not by the intellect alone, but by the clairvoyant faculty; the consciousness rationalizing the profundity of the revelation. It is in the intervals between inspirational peaks that a poet can give full scope to his consciousness by research and study so that his general knowledge may be secure, for he must of necessity write for many who are specialists in some specific field, in which he shall be diminished and shamed should he evade the fundamentals of many and diverse avenues of knowledge; he must also extend his vocabulary, learn to expand it at will; must study languages; become conversant with contemporary movements of thought, of eternal principles, of the teachings of the esoteric schools, of comparisons of philosophy and theology, of metaphysics, and he must also find time in which to revise and polish, retype manuscripts, restudy continually the art of versification, and copy, consider and analyse the monuments of Song.

Fidelity to these lesser tasks cannot fail to bring a great enrichment of expressiveness and authoritativeness so that his work will ultimately come to mean many things to many men in a manner that would be impossible had he been less diligent. By ordering and collating his talents to the fullest a poet of distinction at last achieves the equal utilization of his God-given power, so that at last nothing falls more compliantly to his purpose than what had once seemed un-

amenable and unsubduable, and even what was once so stubborn and inflexible at last is as ingratiating as a hearthside cat, as Dr. Oliver St. John Gogarty has memorably expressed it:

If but the Will be firmly bent
No stuff resists the Mind's intent;
The adamant abets his skill
And sternly aids the artist's will,
To clothe in perdurable pride
Beauty his transient eyes described.

The lesson of the liberating Law of Periodicity, of complete surrender to its full impulsion, and of the attentive waiting for its sure return, has been set down by a number of poets, but by none so significantly and so simply as that still greatly undervalued poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow when he wrote:

Learn to labour, and to wait.

When a poet has learned the Truth that lies behind those six simple words, he is ready to enter into his heritage, and the greatest range of human expressiveness becomes possible to him. It is at this stage of awareness, after long observation of the alternation of day and night, the waxing and the waning of the silver moon, the ebbing and the flowing of the tide, the slow succession of the varied seasons, the flowering and the fruitage of the garden and the orchard trees, of friendly human faces loved and lost awhile, the hopes, the fears, the joys, the changes, the sorrows and the triumphs of the unfaltering cycle of his mounting years, that the self of the poet becomes ever and ever more keenly conscious of the longer rhythm of the Mind and Spirit, and an awareness that these have their bright and antithetical seasons also, that they pass by subtle passages from phase to phase, like light and sea and earth and blood, from motion to non-motion, from seed-time to harvest, from fruitage to barrenness, and it is then that

he apprehends as never before the essential folly of any attempt to hold any experience at a continuous pitch.

The greater the poet the more stringently does he need to exercise unwavering discipline. But even great poets have so relaxed themselves that they have fallen down abysses that sheer from Song's sublimity, so that their verse has wallowed in mediocrity. Not only have some such written out of due season but they have been so deficient in sensibility as to publish lines that are a reproach to any poet's pen.

When a great poet defies the natural rhythm of inspiration and silence, and idly plucks a loosened string, he not only retards the return of inspiration, but he actually weakens the flexibility of his subtler vehicles of expressiveness. It was under such unseasonable labour that Alfred Austin, a poet admired by many contemporaries for the lightness of his lyric line, could produce such inanity as—

Winter is gone, and spring is over ;

The cuckoo flowers grow mauver and
mauver,

and his odious couplet,

When with staid mother's milk and
sunshine warmed

The pasture's frisky innocents bucked
up,

while Tennyson, a greater poet, who, with the white fire of the exultant spirit strong within him could write—

Though much is taken, much abides ;
and though

We are not now the strength which
in the old days

Moved heaven and earth, that which
we are, we are ;

One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but

strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not

to yield...

by writing when the pressure of inspiration had forsaken him, could produce nothing better than the sheerest jingle,

Dash back that ocean with a pier,

Strow yonder mountain flat,

A railway here, a tunnel there,

Mix me this zone with that.

To know the Law, and to wait in patience for the transcendental time is to move in calm concordance with the movement of the stars, to be at one with all creation, and to drink from immortal fountains a resurgent joy to an extent undreamed of by the mere utilitarian of words.

It is the utilization of this knowledge of the Law of Rhythm that enables a great poet to produce prodigies of expression by reason of his directed economy of his resources and his ordered working hours, so that his whole being is fully concentrated upon the swift outpouring of inspirational force and then completely relaxed until the natural tempo of the force brings round the high occasion once again, so that increasingly, he gives only of his best.

Man, in his physically limited experience, in these high moments is briefly what he will ultimately be eternally. According to the development of his finer powers he is capable, here and now, of responding to sublime illumination. It is in his greatest moments that a great poet becomes as a light among his fellows, because he is enabled to capture and convey to them illumination that liberates their spirit and gives their being wider space in which to live. In the light of his best achievement the exalted poet can say with John Ruskin, 'This is the best of me ; for the rest, I ate and drank, and slept, and loved, and hated like another ; my life was as a vapour, and is not ; but this I saw and knew ; this, if anything of mine, is worth your memory.'

The true mission of a great poet is not so much to communicate his personal experiences and his reaction to them, as to kindle in his readers high moods that are identical with his own moments of purest perception. John Butler Yeats, the father of the poet W. B. Yeats, has maintained that 'the poet's meaning is not something to be communicated, or explained, but something to be revealed—a vision, a dream; we see it or we do not see it, that is all—what can be explained or communicated is prose.'

Because this is so, one of the most important tests as to whether verse is Poetry or not is the simple question, 'Out of how small a thing can a poet draw sublime significance?'

Surpassing revelation of virile spiritual activity is the greatest achievement to which a poet may attain, and any poet who convinces his fellows that he has done this will endure through time, even though he may achieve it only once or twice in a long lifetime.

There is a footnote in John Drinkwater's volume "The Lyric" which he once marked and sent to me. It is profoundly illuminating in this respect:

'It may be asked, "Do you really think that a poet who has left no other record of himself than a page or two of songs, even perfect songs, can claim a greater distinction than a great man who is not a poet?" Let me say, once and for all, I do think so. To have written one perfect song is to have given witness and the only kind of witness (in common with the media of other arts) that is finally authoritative, that at least

one supremely exacting mood has been perfectly experienced. And since, with our human conception we can see no good or desirable end beyond the perfect experience of life, the man who proves to us that he has done this, no matter though it has been for a moment, is more distinguished—that is, more definitely set apart in his achievement—than the man who, with whatever earnestness and nobility, has but proved to us that he desired this perfection of experience, even though the desire is exalted by the most heroic altruism.'

But the establishment of a single rhythm upon the consciousness of a poet is not all, for in certain circumstances where the poet's faculties have become extended by long obedience to the Law of Periodicity, it is possible for rhythm upon rhythm to be so superimposed upon his consciousness that he may utilize the intervals of one rhythm to create peaks of achievement on another rhythm, so that his achievements in two or more fields may interlock. When this is possible a poet may write simultaneously two or even three works of markedly varied character, each progressing in complete detachment on separate planes until fulfilment is achieved, as voice on voice may be superimposed by a composer in the polyphonic progression of a fugue.

Happy is he who knows that in all things, the small and the great, the visible and the invisible, the temporal and the eternal, all is Rhythm, and that all that is in accord with the Law of Periodicity is in transcendental harmony.

SARVA-MUKTI

SRI M. K. VENKATARAMA IYER

The most obvious meaning of *Sarva-Mukti* is that absolute release from the shackles of empirical existence is in store not only for human beings but for all living beings. It is their indefeasible birth-right and not even the gods can stand in the way of any sentient being attaining it. Even to speak of it as something attained is not quite correct, for it is nothing new. Release (*mokṣa*), according to Advaita Vedānta, is simply the realization of its true nature by the finite self (*jīva*). In its essential nature it is identical with the Supreme Self (Brahman). Its existence as Brahman is an ever-present, ever-accomplished reality. It is not therefore to be produced anew or attained by going to a different place or brought into being by a process of transformation or purification. In the language of Śrī Śaṅkara, *mokṣa* is neither *utpādya* nor *āpya* nor *vikārya* nor, finally, *saṃskārya*. To realize one's true nature all that one has to do is to tear off the veil that hides it. *Avidyā* or *Māyā* is the name given to this veil. It is beginningless and foundational. It is seated in the heart of every finite being and is therefore spoken of in the Upaniṣad (*Muṇḍaka* II. ii. 8 and III. ii. 9) as the knot of the heart (*hṛdayagranthi*). It acts as an effective curtain concealing the essential nature of the *jīva* from itself. It is said to be beginningless (*anādi*) because no one knows when it came to be associated with the finite self. It is a given fact of experience and there is no denying it. No useful purpose will be served by digging into its foundations. It is there and has to be reckoned with.

The association, though it belongs to a dateless past, can however be terminated by appropriate discipline comprising

śravaṇa, *manana*, *nididhyāsana* and *samā-dhi*. Just as our ignorance relating to empirical facts is removed by observation, experiment and study, even so this foundational ignorance can be got over by going through the prescribed discipline. Study, observation and the use of mechanical appliances may be quite sufficient to acquire knowledge of the world around us, but to overcome this deeper ignorance which clouds our vision and acts as a screen between our real nature and ourselves something more radical is necessary. Spiritual knowledge, it has been said, is a function of our being. We have to raise our moral, intellectual and spiritual stature for this purpose. The discipline laid down in Advaita Vedānta is calculated to serve this purpose.

It presupposes the ability to distinguish between eternal and purely ephemeral values (*nityānitya vastu vivekaḥ*), the complete giving up of the last trace of desire to enjoy the pleasures of the senses both in this world and the world to come (*ihāmutra artha bhoga virāgaḥ*), the cultivation of virtues like restraint of body and mind (*śamadamādi sādhana sampat*) and a burning desire to liberate oneself from the bondage of finite existence (*mumukṣutva*). These preliminary qualifications are collectively known as *sādhana catuṣṭaya*. Their acquisition is the *sine qua non* for entering on the further course of discipline consisting of the hearing of the sacred texts from a competent *guru* (*śravaṇa*), cogitating on their import by employing all one's powers of reasoning (*manana*), unremitting meditation on the ultimate truth enshrined in them (*nididhyāsana*) and, finally, being completely absorbed in it, transcending the

dualism of subject and object (*nirvikalpa-samādhi*). Such discipline, it goes without saying, will bring about a total transformation of our nature. The veil of foundational ignorance will fall off and we will awake to our essential nature.

Such a consummation is well within the reach of every human being provided he is prepared to put forth the necessary effort. There is no doubt that all people will hear the call of the infinite sooner or later and go through the mill of discipline to attune themselves to it. Some will do it earlier than others, but all must hearken to it because the call comes from their own inner self and not from any external source. Just as hunger and thirst, pleasure and pain, sorrow and joy have a way of making themselves felt, even so this spiritual hankering is bound to assert itself and cannot be put by. It will find expression in strange ways if we do not canalize it on proper lines. Sooner or later all of us are bound to listen to its call and do all that is needful to bring it to the forefront. By gradual stages all of us are sure to awaken to our true nature. Release (*mokṣa*) is therefore in store for all of us. It is only a question of time. Some will realize it sooner than others. But there is absolutely no doubt that all will be saved. This is the true meaning of *sarva-mukti*. Advaita Vedānta does not believe in some souls being consigned to eternal damnation. Nor does it believe in different degrees of release like *sāmīpya*, *sālokya* and *sārūpya* for different grades of people. The only kind of release that is open to all is absolute merger in Brahman (*sāyujya*). Even going to *Brahmaloka* is not regarded as final. It is only a stepping stone to ultimate release.

That all human beings are entitled to obtain final release is borne out by a very ancient Vedic text which characterizes

them as 'the sons of immortality' (*amṛt-asya putrāḥ*). In the concluding passage of the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* it is said that having learnt all about Brahman and the practice of *yoga* from Yama, Naciketas became immortal and the same consummation is open to any one else who does the same. 'Having learnt this knowledge imparted by Yama, as also the whole practice of *yoga*, Naciketas became sinless, deathless and immortal. So also will it be with any other who knows this—what relates to the self (*anyopyevam yo vid*). The two *mahāvākyas*, 'That thou art' (*Tat Tvam Asi*) and 'I am indeed Brahman' (*Aham Brahmāsmi*) make it quite clear that any one who listens to the instruction of the *guru*, cogitates on it and practises steady meditation on the truth enshrined in it will inevitably arrive at the realization that he is in reality Brahman. No one is barred from this enlightenment. Even those who are not eligible to listen to the Vedic texts will arrive at the realization by other means. Śrī Śaṅkara makes out this point quite unequivocally in the course of his commentary on the '*apaśūdra adhikaraṇa*'. (*Vedānta-Sūtra* I. iii. 38) 'But for those to whom knowledge dawns as a result of good tendencies acquired in their past lives, as for instance to Vidura, Dharmavyādha and others, the reaping of the result of knowledge is inevitable.' This position is confirmed by the *Smṛti* text: 'One should read out to the four castes by keeping the Brāhmaṇas in the front'. (*Mahābhārata*, Śāntiparvan, ch. 327, śloka 49) 'This text declares the competence of all the four castes for the acquisition of knowledge through the *Itihāsas* and the *Purāṇas*.' The closure of one avenue is purportful only if it is interpreted as opening out other avenues. The knowledge of Brahman need not come only through the study of the Vedic texts but also through other sources such as the

Rāmāyaṇa, *Mahābhārata* and the *Purāṇas*. The underlying implication is that final release is the inalienable birth-right of every one and no one can be balked of it. It is not only possible for all but also inevitable.

We have said above that though release is open to all, some attain it sooner than others. The finite souls take their own time since their qualifications are not the same. Intellectually, morally and spiritually some are more advanced than others and hence the difference in time. Though all are *adhikārins*, they are not *adhikārins* at the same level. A highly advanced *adhikārin* easily grasps the instruction of the teacher, quickly satisfies himself about its soundness and readily falls into meditation. Being an adept in Aṣṭāṅga Yoga he straightaway gets absorbed in *nirvikalpa samādhi* and enters into the state of Absolute Consciousness. The advent of this awakening means the complete extermination of the last trace of *avidyā* and he therefore becomes free though he is still in the flesh. He becomes a *jīvanmukta*. He will continue in that state, doing spiritual ministrations to his fellowmen, till the *prārabdha-karma* which brought his present body into being is exhausted. When it has worked itself out, his body falls and he attains complete release, known as *videha-mukti*. There is no more rebirth for him. The Upaniṣads (*Kaṭha* II. i. 15 and *Chāndogya* VIII. xii. 3) solemnly declare that he never more returns to mundane existence but gets merged in Pure Brahman.

Critics point out that this view ill accords with the Advaitic doctrine of the unity of the Ātman (*ekātmavāda*). If there is only one Ātman, there cannot be any difference in time in the matter of attaining the final release. In fact, the question relating to difference in time does not arise at all since there is only one Ātman.

If there are many Ātmans, we can speak of some becoming free sooner than others, but the Advaitin does not believe in a plurality of Ātmans.

This objection is only apparent and not real. Though the Ātman is one, the finite souls are many and there is no inconsistency involved in this view. The *jīva* is the reflection of the Ātman in the *viññānamaya kośa*. It is therefore known as *cidābhāsa*, the appearance of the *cit* or Ātman in the sheath of self-consciousness. The possibility of the single Ātman appearing as many *jīvas* is elucidated by the example of the single sun appearing as many suns when it is reflected in several pools of water. If the water in one of them gets dried up, that particular image of the sun disappears while the other images continue as before. Similarly if a particular *jīva* arrives at the saving knowledge, it ceases to exist as a *jīva* and becomes one with the Ātman. It is like the reflected image getting back to the sun. Nothing, however, happens to the other *jīvas*. They will continue in the state of bondage till they also acquire the unitive knowledge.

This line of reasoning is from the phenomenal or lower point of view. It goes on the assumption that in reality there are many *jīvas*. But this is a fictitious notion. It arises from ignorance. Strictly speaking there is only one Ātman and there is no question of its attaining release for it was never bound. In the state of ignorance we speak of the *jīva*, which was bound at one time, becoming free later as a result of *śravaṇa*, *manana* and so forth. But all this talk is meaningful only from the lower *vyāvahārika* point of view and not from the higher *pāramārthika* standpoint.

A man places his foot on some object and believes that he has trodden on a snake. Later when light is brought he

sees only a piece of rope in that place. It may be said that at one point of time he saw a snake and at a later point of time, it disappeared. But on further questioning the man will admit that in reality there was no snake in that place even at the time when he believed that he saw one. There being no snake in that place, the question of its disappearance at a later time does not arise at all. From the standpoint of ignorance it is permissible to speak of the existence of the snake at one moment and its non-existence at a later moment. But from the standpoint of enlightenment there is neither the existence of the snake nor its subsequent non-existence.

Just as the difference between day and night has no relevance so far as the inhabitants of the sun are concerned but is relevant so far as the inhabitants of other planets are concerned, even so to the knower of Brahman who has awakened to the unity of the Ātman, all talk about bondage and release is simply meaningless, though it is quite meaningful to ordinary people immersed in ignorance. Śrī Śaṅkara (*Śataślokī*, 24) and Śrī Sadāśiva Brahmendra (*Ātmavidyāvilāsa*, 41) have made out this point quite clearly. None is ever bound and none is ever set free. Śrī Gauḍapāda writes (*Māṇḍūkya-Kārikā*, 'Vaitathy prakaraṇa', sl. 32): 'The supreme truth is that there is no destruction, no origination, no one who strives for success, no one who desires for release and no one who is released.'

Bondage and release are therefore only relatively real. In the state of ignorance they have a meaning. The progress from bondage to release is also relatively real. The progress is rapid or slow according as the *jīva* is well or ill-equipped for the task. The existence of the *jīva* is also only relatively real. Owing to the difference in the equipment, some arrive at the state

of release sooner than others. This difference in time is also of the same order of reality as the rest. From the lower standpoint it is quite meaningful to speak of bondage and freedom, the progress from the one to the other, need for individual effort, difference in equipment and consequent difference in the time taken by the *jīvas* to reach perfection. But from the higher, transcendental point of view, all this talk becomes meaningless. There is nothing absurd in this position, though Sri Aurobindo seems to think so. He writes: 'For the illusionist the individual soul is an illusion and non-existent except in the inexplicable mystery of Māyā. Therefore we arrive at the escape of an illusory, non-existent soul from an illusory, non-existent bondage, in an illusory, non-existent world as the supreme good which that non-existent soul has to pursue.' (*Life Divine*, Vol. I, part I, p. 59) The two standpoints are quite different. Śrī Śaṅkara has made it quite clear in several contexts that prior to the rise of true knowledge all the usual distinctions such as between bondage and release are perfectly valid. Commenting on the *Vedānta-Sūtra* (II. i. 14) he writes: 'Prior to the realization of the unity of the self, all activities can justly be true like the activities in dream before waking up. So long as the oneness of the true self is not realized, nobody entertains the idea of unreality when dealing with the means of knowledge, objects of knowledge and the results, rather, as a matter of fact, all creatures discard their natural oneness with Brahman to accept through ignorance the difference between "I and mine" that is to say, as one's self as belonging to oneself.'

It has been said that for final and absolute release, the *jīvanmukta* has to wait only till the *prārabdha-karma* is exhausted and his present body falls. But

some later Advaitins have held the view that there is no complete liberation for any soul till all the finite souls have become fit for release. For them, *mokṣa* is not an individual affair but a collective one. It is for all or for none. This is what they mean by *sarva-mukti*. The *jīvanmukta* has therefore to wait for complete release not only till his body falls but till the end of the world-period (*kalpa*) when all the *jīvas* will become fit for release. If his body falls as soon as the *prārabdha* is over, he will have to be reborn again to continue his service to his fellowmen in bondage. The persistence of *avidyā* somewhere in the world will have to be eradicated and he will have to exert himself in that behalf. 'So long as there is a single unreleased soul', writes Śrī Appayya Dīkṣita, '*avidyā* is not completely destroyed and there can be no absolute realization for any other soul, however advanced it may be in the path of perfection. Even the *jīvanmukta* has to wait for his final release till the world-period (*kalpa*) comes to an end and all souls are liberated owing to the destruction of *avidyā*. Till then he will have to be reborn again and again and work for the redemption of the rest of fellowmen.'

Sri Aurobindo in recent times is a powerful exponent of this view. He writes: 'The individual soul can only cut the knot of ego by a supreme act of egoism, an exclusive attachment to its own individual salvation which amounts to an absolute assertion of its separate existence in the *Māyā*. We are led to regard other souls as if they were figments of our minds and their salvation unimportant; our soul alone as if it were entirely real and its salvation the one thing that matters. I come to regard my personal escape from bondage as real while other souls who are equally myself remain

behind in bondage!' (*Life Divine*, Vol. I, Part I, p. 60) 'Strictly speaking the unity of the liberated soul with the transcendent is incomplete without its unity with the cosmic many. And that lateral unity translates itself by a multiplication, a reproduction of its own liberated state at other points in the multiplicity... Is it altogether a legend which says of the Buddha that as he stood on the threshold of *nirvāṇa*, his soul turned back and took the vow never to make the irrevocable crossing as long as there was a single being upon the earth still undelivered from the knot of suffering, from the bondage of the ego? We can attain to the highest without blotting ourselves out from the cosmic scene'. (ibid., p. 62)

The Christian view is that just as the fall of Adam meant the fall of the whole of mankind, even so the redemption of Adam by the vicarious suffering of Christ means the redemption of the entire human race. We fell in a mass and we will be redeemed in the same manner. We are not isolated and unconnected individuals but members of an organic and inseparable society. The sin of one member is the sin of all and the same is true of enlightenment. No individual is saved to the exclusion of the rest. Either all are redeemed or none is redeemed.

Some modern writers draw support for this view from recent developments in the realm of Physics. According to this view, the isolated atom is an abstraction, a mere figment of the imagination. What we have is really a continuous field of matter. This is according to the new physics of Einstein. This field theory, in the opinion of recent psychologists, is applicable to the sphere of religion and morality as well. Progress in the realm of spirituality is consequently not an isolated affair. Any individual who reaches moral and

spiritual perfection exerts a silent influence on his fellowmen. The whole of humanity marches as one unit towards perfection. There is no question of any individual extricating himself from the general movement. Matthew Arnold's tribute to his father in 'Rugby Chapel' (Lines: 124 to 144) bears out this view:

To thee it was given
Many to save with thyself
And at the end of the day
O faithful shepherd! to come
Bringing thy sheep in thy hand.

This notion of *sarva-mukti* has no doubt a powerful appeal to the modern mind obsessed with the belief in human equality. Social and political ideologies such as socialism and communism have stressed the belief in equality to such an extent as to leave no scope for individuals putting forth their best effort and rising superior to the rest.

But these ideologies are extraneous to the realm of spirituality. They have simply no relevance there. Equality has not been realized even in the social or economic sphere. Much less is it capable of realization in the realm of spirituality. The Advaitin therefore regards it as mere myth. It is neither in the beginning nor at the end. All men are not equally en-

dowed in respect of their intellectual and moral gifts. There are huge differences between one man and another. At the end, the question of equality does not arise at all, because all individuals lose their identity in Brahman who is the sole reality. What is non-existent in the beginning and at the end is, according to the criterion furnished by Śrī Gauḍapāda, non-existent in the intervening period also.

There is no reason therefore why the *jīvanmukta* should wait till the others catch up with him. As long as the body caused by his *prārabdha-karma* lasts he will undoubtedly do spiritual ministration to his fellowmen but it is illogical to expect him to be born again and again to do such service in order to enable the rest to qualify themselves for release. Just as nothing can prevent him from attaining *jīvanmukti* by his own individual effort, even so nothing can stand in the way of attaining absolute release as soon as his body falls. The Śruti text (*Chāndogya* VI. xiv. 2) makes this point unequivocally clear. 'For him there is delay only so long as the body does not fall. After its fall he becomes merged in Pure Brahman.' Commenting on *Vedānta-Sūtra* (IV. iv. 22) Śrī Śaṅkara also clinched this point.

ON THE METHODOLOGY OF COMPARATIVE RELIGION

PROFESSOR BENOY GOPAL RAY

Comparative religion or rather the comparative study of religion is of recent origin. In the latter half of the nineteenth century interest in comparative study of world-religions began to grow. Attention of philosophers, philologists, theologians, historians and anthropologists

was drawn to this fascinating study. But its scope and method were not clearly determined. Even now a good deal of confusion exists regarding the scope and method of this discipline. Round about 1867 the great German scholar Max Müller used an expression *Religions wissenschaft*

to signify a distinct branch of study. Its aim, according to him, is to investigate religions scientifically. It is to be distinguished from philosophy of religion and theology. With the help of philological researches Max Müller wanted to reach the fundamental essence of all religions. By using the rational method he hoped to determine the perennial religious experience of all mankind which underlies the various historic religions. But by relying too much on reason he brought the new discipline under the sway of philosophy of religion. Religions centre round the concept of God who is Supreme Subjectivity and as such He cannot be treated merely as an object of reason. In the present century some scholars have been trying to keep comparative religion free from all philosophical assumptions. But it is doubtful whether this study can be so isolated. Some have been using the terms history of religion and comparative religion in an identical sense. These days *Religions wissenschaft* is used as history of religion or comparative religion. But a distinction should be drawn between these two subjects. History of religion should be content with the description of historic and pre-historic religions. In other words it should only be a descriptive study. But comparative religion is both descriptive and non-descriptive. It is an autonomous discipline though it leans on such auxiliary studies as history, phenomenology, psychology, sociology, anthropology and philosophy. In so far as it is dependent on philosophy and phenomenology, comparative religion assumes a non-descriptive character.

It is wrongly believed that the aim of comparative religion is to compare the various religions with a view to finding out their points of similarity and difference. Religions agree with one another and also disagree but it is no concern of compara-

tive religion to point out the areas of agreement and disagreement. The proper objective of comparative religion is to find the unity of all mankind. There is a universal religiosity which is to be unearthed. Beginning from cavemen down to the moderns of this century a unity of primordial religious experience runs through the entire history of mankind.

Schleiermacher spoke of divination as a universal faculty of man. Faculty of divination as Otto describes it is the faculty of genuinely cognizing and recognizing the Holy in its appearances. (*The Ideal of the Holy*, 1952, p. 144) By calling it universal one should not mean that it is *actually* present in any single individual. It is a general capacity of mind and as such it is to be counted as a universal potentiality of man. When man encounters a higher reality, be it totem, spirit or God, when he is confronted by the vast totality of things, he has an experience which transcends mere empirical facts. This transcending 'overplus' is grasped by religious institution. Comparative religion aims at the discovery of unity displayed in universal divination.

There is another false notion about the nature of comparative religion. Some people fondly believe that the comparative study of religion might ultimately lead to the formulation of a synthetic religion. Far from it, it is no business of comparative religion to harmonize the claims of different religions. Nor is it occupied with the task of classifying the religions as high or low. A comparative religionist is no judge of religions. His main business is to trace the line of continuity with a view to determining the unity of mankind in religious experience. But to get at the pristine religiosity is no easy task. Comparative religion aims at the discovery of unity displayed in universal divination.

There is yet another false belief regarding the utility of a comparative study of religions. In some quarters people believe that such a study might remove the growing irreligiousness from the minds of men. A word of caution is necessary at this step. Comparative religion is an intellectual discipline and as such its main function is to know and not to change. Comparative religionist is content when he understands the fundamental unity of all men in religious experience. In other words, this study does not undertake the task of making one religious in the ordinary sense of the term. An honest perusal of this discipline might widen the moral horizon of an individual. He may become more tolerant, more charitable and more fraternal. But such an act of widening is not the task of comparative religion. It may at best be taken as its side-effect.

What method or methods should then be adopted by comparative religion? Before we address ourselves to this question we should first discuss how we shall approach the subject matter. The first essential is the removal of dogmatism from the mind of the intending pursuer of comparative religion. Hitherto many western scholars have studied world-religions from a biased angle. Prof. W. C. Smith writes: 'The traditional form of western scholarship in the study of other men's religion was that of an impersonal presentation of an "it". The first great innovation in recent times has been the personalization of the faiths observed, so that one finds a discussion of a "they". Presently the observer becomes personally involved so that the situation is one of a "we" talking about a "they". The next step is a dialogue where "we" talk to "you". If there is listening and mutuality, this may become that "we" talk with "you". The culmination of this progress is when we all are talking with each other about

us.' (*The History of Religions*, Edited by Eliade and Kitagawa, 1959, p. 34) Comparative religionists have always to remember that their discipline is not an impersonal science like physics or chemistry. It is a man-centred discipline and as such some amount of personalization of the various faiths is necessary. To collect data for this study is an arduous task. The intending scholar has to approach the different faiths very sympathetically. The second essential is self-criticism of one's own religion. One of the dangers of the methodology of comparative religion lies in the overestimation of one's own religion. If I think that my religion is undoubtedly the best of all possible religions and if I am tempted to view other faiths from the narrow angle of my own faith, I miss the very ideal of comparative religion. I do not realize the unity of all mankind. Unconsciously I become a judge of religions and impose gradations on them. The western Christian must not assume the ecclesiastical pattern of Christianity as the sole criterion when he goes to analyse other religions. Similarly a Hindu must not study other faiths only from the Vedic view-point. The third essential is to study the subject matter as objectively as possible. A question of importance arises here: Can comparative religion be studied objectively? As hinted above this discipline is subjective-objective. Nobody claims that comparative religion should be an out and out objective and impersonal study. On the other hand it must not be only a record of subjective emotions and feelings. What is wanted of a comparative religionist is the real scientific attitude which is unbiased and free from fetters.

As to the method or methods of comparative religion, there is no unanimity amongst scholars. Some have followed only the historico-comparative method. They

have studied histories of different religions from the comparative viewpoint and arrived at certain basic facts. But their study centres round objective rituals, institutions and dogmas of different religions. They care very little for the subjective attitudes and beliefs of religious people. We mentioned earlier that some scholars identified history of religion with comparative religion. According to them, the method should be descriptive-systematic. Prof. J. Kitagawa following his teacher Wach divides *Religions wissenschaft* into historical and systematic sub-divisions. 'Under the heading of "historical" come the general history of religion and the histories of specific religions. Under the heading of "systematic" come phenomenological, comparative, sociological and psychological studies of religions. All these sub-divisions are regarded as integral parts of *Religions wissenschaft*'. (ibid., p. 19) Prof. Kitagawa uses *Religions wissenschaft* as history of religion or comparative religion. His method seems to be too comprehensive to be feasible. It is true, comparative religion is not a composite of various disciplines mentioned above. It is an autonomous discipline though it leans on certain auxiliary studies. But to formulate a method of comparative religion covering all these disciplines seems to be over-ambitious. Also it is difficult to get a clear picture of the method itself. It seems to be an omnibus. What is needed is a clear-cut method which can easily be put into practice. While formulating the method one has to remain true to the main objective of comparative religion, viz. the discovery of unity of mankind in religious experience. In our opinion the method should be historico-phenomenological. Religious experience has two sides, external and internal. In order to get at the bases of such experience one has to take into account external rituals, institu-

tions and dogmas and internal beliefs and attitudes. We believe, historico-phenomenological method can do justice to both. A comparative religionist has to study the forms of pre-historic and historic religions. He compares them with a view to determining the basic elements of religious experience. Again from the basic elements the universals of religious behaviour have to be discovered. Herein we enter into phenomenology. Mere observation of religious behaviour and study of hermeneutics are not enough. One has to get into a dialogue with religious people. Only by a systematic and sympathetic dialogue one can understand the inner beliefs and attitudes of religious people. No statement about a particular religion is valid if it is not accepted by the believers of that religion. An outsider can very well study the external data of a religion but he cannot penetrate the layer of faith which is its essential unless he takes recourse to a suitable dialogue. While selecting the data for comparative religion each and every statement of a believer need not be taken into account. The comparative religionist has to distinguish carefully between essentials and non-essentials. Even though he is dealing with persons he must maintain an overall academic impartiality and selectivity.

Historical study of religions yields us certain basic facts of religious life and behaviour. To illustrate a few: There is the reality of a transcendent Being who has also immanent manifestations. Human beings have imaged him as the ruler, the father, the mother, the friend, the bridegroom, the son and the daughter. No religion is without its God, not even Buddhism and Jainism. Acceptance of the reality of God in some form or other is a basic fact of religion. Another basic fact lies in the way of man to God. God of religion is

not a relationless and secluded Reality. In some way or other an intimate relation is established between Him and man. Every religion, be it pre-historic or historic, makes provision for at least one of the following : worship, prayer, meditation and contemplation. These facts by themselves do not lead us to the concept of unity unless we discover the universals that lie behind them. We have to transcend the facts to discover the true universals of religious behaviour. We shall not bracket the facts as is done by a pure phenomenologist but we shall

transcend them. When the subject is confronted with certain basic religious facts, he tries to dive into the layer of universal relations and ideal essences. These universals of essences are the strongholds of unity. They are coercive and communicable and hence they possess objectivity. When we say that they are coercive and communicable, we do not mean that they are on a par with the universals of science. Religious communication is possible only amongst kindred souls and religious universals command objectivity and validity only for them.

ŚAṆKARA AND THE CAUSAL CONCEPT

(PART-I)

MR. MAX NOLAN

As a writer pre-eminently of philosophical exegesis, Śaṅkara's discussions of causal theory are animated by his advocacy of certain texts of Śruti e.g. the question addressed to Śvetaketu by his father, wherein the young man, fresh from his studies and full of self-assurance, is asked whether he has sought for that instruction whereby what cannot be heard is heard, what cannot be perceived is perceived, what cannot be known is known. Śvetaketu asks his father to explain, and the latter replies, 'My dear, as by one clod of clay all that is made of clay is known, the difference being only a name, arising from speech, but the truth being that all is clay . . . such is that teaching.' (*Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, VI. i. 4) The father gives several other examples to show that to know the material cause of an object is to know *all* objects made of the same material, their differences in form being merely a matter of speech.

In the conversation between Yājñavalkya and Maitreyī there is another saying which is pregnant with meaning in the present context, for Śaṅkara, where Yājñavalkya declares, 'When the Self has been seen, heard, perceived, and known, then all this is known.' (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, IV. v. 6)

These and several other important passages form the seminal basis of his conception of cause. From them he develops certain implications as to the scope and meaning of cause, and defends his views by some sustained argumentation against conflicting interpretations.

As with other topics with which he deals, Śaṅkara's discussions of causal theory are spread somewhat at random throughout his *bhāṣyas*, although the most substantial treatment from a polemical point of view is to be found in the second chapter of the *Brahma-Sūtra-Bhāṣya*.

This article shall consider three major

aspects of Śaṅkara's views on causality:

(a) His own use of the concept and its relation to the general background of his Advaita philosophy. (b) His criticism of non-Advaitic views on causality. (c) His criticism of causality as an *ultimate explanatory principle*.

The following may be suggested as the chief characteristics appertaining to cause, as according to Śaṅkara: (a) The invariant relation between cause and effect. (b) The temporal priority of the cause in relation to the effect. (c) The superiority of the cause in relation to the effect. (d) The pre-existence of the effect in the cause. From the latter Śaṅkara argues to the essential non-difference between cause and effect.

Śaṅkara usually distinguishes between two main types of causation: material and efficient.

The foregoing sums up the more positive aspects of Śaṅkara's views on cause. Within certain limits, outlined by the pre-suppositions of his philosophical system, he regards the causal concept as a valid instrument of thought. The limitations are the resultant of that which he construes to be *Māyā*, and thus he assigns the concept to the sphere of *vyāvahārika*, or the relatively real.

Let us first consider Śaṅkara's use of the causal concept with regard to his doctrine of Brahman, and the problem of the relationship of the latter to the world, following this with a consideration of his critique of causal theories set against the type he is prepared to accept, bringing the analysis to a conclusion with an examination of his reasons for regarding causality as inherently incapable, as a category of thought, of answering the ultimate problems of religion and philosophy. Since his doctrine of Brahman and *Māyā* is at the centre of his philosophical position, it will be necessary to consider his dialectic against

opposing views following on a review of the rationale of his own position.

According to Śaṅkara the central doctrine of the Upaniṣads revolves around the nature of Brahman and Ātman, and their essential identity. In many passages of the Upaniṣads Brahman is spoken of as the non-dual spirit: the unique reality which has nothing set against it, e.g. 'For when there is as it were duality, then one sees the other, one smells the other, one tastes the other ...; but when the Self only is all this, how should he see another, how should he smell another, how should he taste another ...? How should he know him by whom he knows all this? That Self is to be described as "not this, not this"'. (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka* IV. v. 15) It will be noticed there are three central ideas embodied in this statement, later to be developed by Advaita: (a) Reality is non-dual. (b) Reality is identified with the Self. (c) Reality, or the Self, is consciousness. It is self-revelatory and is at the basis of all forms of knowledge. This much indicates the positive side of the Advaitic doctrine of Brahman.

There is, on the other hand, an insistence that reality is 'not this, not this', containing an implication about the world which was also to figure largely in Advaita philosophy as it developed. The world is a plurality of finite particulars, whereas Brahman is non-dual. Consider also the following, 'Where one sees nothing else, hears nothing else, understands nothing else, that is the infinite. Where one sees something else, hears something else, understands something else, that is the finite. The Infinite is immortal, the finite is mortal.' (*Chāndogya Upaniṣad* VII. xxiv. 1) This negative kind of teaching about Brahman is plainly acosmic, *niṣprapañca*.

There are other passages in the Upaniṣads where Brahman is conceived as bringing forth from out of Its own pure and re-

splendent being the whole diversity of universal creation. Brahman is there conceptualized in richly cosmic terms, *saprapaṇca*, e.g. 'From Him come all the seas and mountains; from Him flow the rivers of every kind; from Him come all the herbs and their juices ...' (*Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* II. i. 9).

Śaṅkara, having developed upon the Upaniṣadic conception of Brahman as *niṣprapaṇca* as representing the ultimate truth taught by the Upaniṣads, had the problem of reconciling this bold monistic doctrine with other notions expressed in the Upaniṣads of the *saprapaṇca* variety.

For if Brahman really did produce the manifold effects of the world, did not this then argue for a pluralistic and realistic world-view?

Scholars who have studied the likelihood of Buddhist intellectual influences on Śaṅkara have sometimes pointed to the similarity between the latter's distinction between empirical experience (*vyāvahārika*) and absolute reality (*pāramārthika*), and Nāgārjuna's distinction between *samvṛti-satya* and *paramārtha-satya*. Whatever the likelihood of this may be, Śaṅkara, as with other orthodox commentators, was confronted with the practical necessity of harmonizing the divergent notions sanctified by the Śruti.

There is in the Upaniṣads no systematic attempt to develop and expand the doctrines of *avidyā* and *Māyā*, which were to be so important to the Advaita philosophy. Of course these basic ideas are contained in a germinal form in the Upaniṣads, but there is a multitude of ideas which rear in many directions in these wonderfully speculative scriptures, and the writers of philosophical exegesis, with some school or tradition to defend, have had to play the role of interpreter and synthesizer. The reconciliation of apparently opposing ideas has been a task of all Upaniṣadic

commentators since Bādarāyaṇa. Śaṅkara as we know was absolutely dedicated to the mission of proving that the Upaniṣads propounded a philosophy which was consistent and coherent in all its aspects.

Śaṅkara sought to resolve this problem of interpretation through the application of his distinction between statements of Śruti directed to the standpoint of *vyāvahārika*, and statements of Śruti concerned with *pāramārthika*. The *saprapaṇca* aspect of Brahman, while appearing real enough from *within* the context of empirical experience itself, was *but* appearance, while the *niṣprapaṇca* aspect was the reality, upon which the former was superimposed. In this way those texts lending support to the creative teaching about Brahman could be readily interpreted as referring to Brahman's aspect as 'appearance' and not to its essence or real being. Thibaut rightly observed that by this adroit method Śaṅkara was able to do more justice to the complex totality of Upaniṣadic teaching than other commentators, such as Rāmānuja, who had difficulty in explaining away Advaitic-type statements in the Śruti.

Through the supernal experience of *Brahma-jñāna*, or the intuitive knowledge of Brahman, according to Śaṅkara, we rise from the level of being disclosed to us in our present empirical existence to a unitive vision in which the world is seen as none other than Brahman, bereft of finitude and multiplicity.

Now it follows from the premise that this world is in the ultimate sense an appearance, which is sublated as such by the knowledge of Brahman, that causal relations, as an integral part of this world-appearance, have a cognitive value restricted to it, and cannot yield any information beyond it.

In the *Vivekacūdāmaṇi* (236), attributed to Śaṅkara, it is written, 'Whatever a

deluded man perceives through mistake, is Brahman and Brahman alone: the silver is nothing but the mother-of-pearl. It is Brahman which is always considered as this universe, whereas that which is superimposed on the Brahman, viz., the universe, is merely a name.' (Translation by Swami Madhavananda, Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Almora)

The silver in the foregoing analogy from illusion, has no real existence *as such* and cannot sustain the analysis we would give to a real piece of silver. We can speak of the analysis of a real piece of silver *as such*, but the procedure is superfluous with regard to illusory silver, since the real object in this case is the mother-of-pearl. What is being examined is the mother-of-pearl, although it may erroneously be taken for a genuine piece of silver. When the false notion of the real silver is sublated by the apprehension of the true ground of the appearance, i.e. the mother-of-pearl, we are prepared to grant that the apparent object of our illusory experience did not really exist as perceived. Not that it was entirely unreal, since by virtue of its apparent presentation to consciousness it existed as *some* sort of entity, but it was not real either, since it turned out to be something other than what we thought it to be.

Similarly is the case with regard to the relation between Brahman and the world. Of course the world is for Śaṅkara more than a mere illusion; he clearly and often distinguishes between illusory (*prātibhāsika*) and empirical (*vyāvahārika*) experience. However, empirical experience, while having a superior degree of reality to the illusory events which sometimes occur within it, is itself subordinate to a superior reality, which is *its* ground, i.e. Brahman. What applies to the illusory silver in relation to the mother-of-pearl applies also to the relation between the

world and Brahman—what is perceived in both cases is by true knowledge sublated and is recognized as non-different from its ground.

While causal relations are a legitimate subject of discourse *within* the context of the world-order, we cannot properly speak of a causal relation between the latter and Brahman. In his *bhāṣya* on *Brahma-Sūtra* (I. i.2) Śaṅkara disallows the notion that Brahman can be proved on the basis of the inference that the world-order is an effect and must therefore have a cause. Such relationships are established within the world between mutually perceptible phenomena. In these cases we do not and cannot argue from the mere perception of a given object to a causal relation between *it* and something else which is never presented as its invariable antecedent. Yet this is what the above inference attempts to do. While the world itself is disclosed to us through the means of the senses, Brahman is not so revealed at any time. Therefore, argues Śaṅkara, it is not possible by this method of inference to prove that the world is connected with Brahman or some other principle as its effect.

Bādarāyaṇa's aphorism actually declares, according to the commentators, that Brahman is that from which the world issues forth, by which it is sustained, and ultimately dissolved. Śaṅkara does not take this to be a rendition of the cosmological argument, but a restatement of the Upaniṣadic texts which authoritatively state that Brahman is the cause of the world. (e.g. *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* III. 1) The appeal is directly to the authority of Śruti, since inference cannot independently prove that the world has Brahman as its cause.

Śaṅkara remarks, however, that inference, providing it does not contradict the teachings of Śruti, may be used to confirm the import of the latter. So he is by no means averse to the cosmological argument as a

means to directing our attention to the existence of Brahman. The cosmological and teleological arguments crop up in various forms throughout his *bhāṣyas*, so he clearly ascribes some value to them.

There are causal-type explanations which account for the existence of the world independently of Brahman, in other words ignoring or denying any necessity of postulating Brahman at all. Śaṅkara sought to meet these explanations on their own ground by deploying the argument from cause in favour of Brahman. That the world was purely the result of a chance collocation of atoms, that it emerged from nothingness, that it had its origin in some insentient principle such as *pradhāna*—the weaknesses in these views could be exposed by the consideration of the cosmological and teleological arguments, even if in the final analysis these arguments could not of themselves provide the definite proof of Brahman.

It is always essential in Advaita to bear in mind the precise context within which a statement about reality is made. For example, if I, as a *jīva* or individual self, subject to *avidyā*, declare that the world is unreal, it may be asked as to what right I have to make such an assumption. For if we agree to accept the premise that unreality is determined by a reference to that which is real, then the question may be pressed as to what ground I have for making this statement, since by virtue of my state of ignorance or *avidyā* I am not in a position to contrast the real with the unreal. The statement only begins to make some logical sense when either I appeal to Śruti or else I overcome my *avidyā* and personally intuit the Brahman. Leaving these two considerations aside, my assertion as to the unreality of the world is a gratuitous assumption if it is based *solely* upon relative experience, *vyāvahārika*. The validity of the assertion depends on its

being addressed from the higher standpoint of *pāramārthika*. The point being made here is that at the level of *vyāvahārika*, the world is no more or less real than the *jīva* itself. There is accordingly no inconsistency in the employment of the normal methods of reason by the Advaitin within the sphere of *vyāvahārika*. And so causality, as an essential category involved in our empirical processes of knowledge, is taken up by Śaṅkara himself. It is a means to an end, but this end lies beyond the relative world of space and time.

Śaṅkara's concept of causation as previously indicated develops from the basis of certain pronouncements and illustrations in Śruti, which preach Advaitism. As a consequence he strongly opposes those theories of causation which argue to essential differences between causes and effects, since this opens the way to dvaitism in metaphysics. Cause and effect are, for Śaṅkara, non-different, and thus he maintains in discussing the causality of Brahman that the latter is both the efficient *and* material cause of the universe. He derives scriptural support from such passages as the following from the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (VI. i. 2-3), already referred to. 'have you ever asked for that instruction by which we hear what cannot be heard, by which we perceive what cannot be perceived, by which we know what cannot be known?' Śaṅkara interprets this (*Brahma-Sūtra-Bhāṣya*, I. iv. 23) as teaching of how by the knowledge of one thing all else, even if unknown, becomes known. Śaṅkara then argues that the knowledge of all things can only proceed from a knowledge of their material cause. He refers to the classic illustration in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, where a knowledge of the basic constituent of clay is said to render possible our recognition of all objects, no matter how diversified in form,

which are made of clay. This recognition is possible for the effects (the various shapes and forms the clay has assumed) are non-different from their cause.

Now it is a matter of common experience that material causes differ from their efficient causes, for example there is the difference between the carpenter and his building. But Brahman is for Śaṅkara an exception to this general rule. In speaking of the causality of phenomena in the world the distinction holds good, but perplexing difficulties arise, Śaṅkara claims, if we do not cast Brahman (as the sole origin of the universe) in the role of both.

Śaṅkara urges that Brahman must necessarily be accepted as the material cause of the universe, otherwise the logical implications of Śruti teaching will be contradicted. Taking any efficient cause from experience, i.e., *vyāvahārika*, we will find that a knowledge of it is not inclusive of a knowledge of the material cause upon which the efficient cause acts. A knowledge of the carpenter for example does not entail a knowledge of his building. If it is accepted that Brahman is at least the efficient cause of the universe, by those who recognize the Śruti, but without recognizing Brahman as the material cause also, then it must be explained how it is that the Śruti texts can declare that on knowing Brahman all else is known. As a principle different from the material cause upon which it acts the knowledge of the former will not therefore entail a knowledge of the latter. The scriptural assertion can only be understood therefore if Brahman be accented as both the material and the efficient cause.

If for the sake of argument Brahman is to be considered as the efficient cause only, the question arises as to how it is related to the material cause, and to in-

dividual souls as well if both these categories are regarded as separate realities. (*Brahma-Sūtra-Bhāṣya* II. ii. 38) The material cause of the world is supposed by some philosophers (e.g. Yoga and Sāṅkhya) to be an infinite substance, *pradhāna*, in itself impartite but, either through some form of evolution (as in Sāṅkhya cosmology) or through the efficient causality of God (e.g. Yoga) becoming manifest in a multiplicity of forms in a varying degree of grossness. Along with this view as to the nature of the material cause, these philosophers also hold that *individual* souls share in common with *pradhāna* the qualities of being impartite and infinite.

Śaṅkara argues that if we accept all these premises it becomes difficult to explicate the relationship between them. The character of Brahman as ruler over *pradhāna* and souls implies a definite sort of relation between them. Such a relation cannot be by way of *saṁyoga*, or conjunction, since God, *pradhāna* and the individual souls are respectively held to be impartite and infinite. Conjunction takes place between separate entities, but separateness of existence implies limitation with regard to the entities conjoined, and this cannot be implied of the entities in question. Nor can the relationship between God, *pradhāna* and souls be defined in terms of inherence. Between entities which are mutually impartite and infinite it is impossible to establish which might inhere in which. It may be pleaded in reply to these objections that at least there exists the fact of the *effect*, or creation, so there must be a relation between them of some sort, if somewhat special. But even this will not do, for this assumption takes for granted the point that has yet to be proved. We cannot introduce the notion of a causal relation prior to the determination of whether there is a relation.

Śaṅkara concludes that it is better to dis-

pense altogether with the notion of these categories as separate existents and to resolve the issue by accepting his solution of their connexion as a case of *tādātmya*, or identity.

This outline of part of Śaṅkara's critique of the doctrine of God as efficient cause only anticipates his discussion generally of non-Advaitic concepts of cause, with which I shall be dealing in a later section. This much is mentioned here to indicate the *rationality* of his approach towards the establishment of his own Advaitic system, which involves on the one hand straightforward exposition of the Advaitic system itself and on the other a keen eye for weaknesses inherent in the alternative systems. The expository side of his writing, always full of depth and subtlety, does not suffer from lack of the scrutiny which the philosopher gives to other views. A study of the hypothetical dialogues, which are such a characteristic feature of Śaṅkara's commentaries, would seem to bear this out.

This brings us to a brief consideration of some very fundamental problems which the Advaita, as a strict philosophy of monism, or non-dualism, has to face. One of these important objections is as to how Brahman can be the *material* cause of the world, since It is defined in terms of *cit*, or pure consciousness. The elements of the physical world are without sentience and are utterly different from Brahman. As a method of establishing Its non-dualism the Advaita postulates the identity of material cause and effect. As proof of this it is pointed out by them that, to take several instances, gold ornaments cannot be produced from earthen material, nor earthen vessels from gold. Yet the Advaita of Śaṅkara claims that the variegated and insentient objects of the world have as their material cause the transcendent Brahman. As Śaṅkara himself puts the

objection: 'It is not a matter of experience that things differing in nature can be related as the material cause and its effect.'

(*Brahma-Sūtra-Bhāṣya*, II. i. 4., Translation by Swami Gambhirananda, Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta-14)

This difficulty may be circumvented by saying that this world, as the effect of Brahman, has in fact the nature of intelligence, but this intelligence is not-manifest, not non-existent. As an analogy the case is mentioned of the non-manifestation of intelligence by intelligent beings in certain states, such as sleep. This explanation, however, even if it were valid, would still not do away with the fundamental problem as to how the transcendent Brahman, which is non-dual, could produce from Itself the variety of the world. Even if a latent intelligence is conceded to stocks and stones, this does not override their impurity or plurality as compared to the non-dual Brahman.

If the Advaita accepts as fact this emergence of the world from Brahman, rejection ought to follow of its belief in Satkāryavāda, the pre-existence of the effect in its cause. There is a hiatus between the two, which precludes the latter.

In his commentary on *Brahma-Sūtra* (II. i. 7) Śaṅkara approaches this objection by an indirect route. The negation of the existence of an effect prior to its occurrence amounts to the negation of a non-entity. Where there is nothing to be negated what is the point of the negation? The inference seems to be that if the object of the negation is the effect prior to its origination or production, then it must somehow be located in its cause.

But this argument, while presenting a strong case for the Satkāryavāda doctrine as such, does not prove what has to be proved, that the causal relation obtaining between Brahman and the world is one of material identity, such as may demonstrably

be the case with the common examples set forth to support the Satkāryavāda theory.

Śaṅkara tries to meet the problem with an analogy. It is seen, he observes, that from conscious beings such as men there issue forth such non-conscious things as hair and nails. And from such non-conscious sources as cowdung there emerge sentient creatures such as scorpions. It has to be admitted that as it stands such an analogy is decidedly fragile, and if taken too literally may lead to conclusions quite incompatible with his idealism and the arguments he generally uses. Since he anticipated objections to it, it may be taken that his point in using it was not without a basis of reflection. In the present context he is anxious to make the point that in our ordinary experience it is not an invariable rule that there should be likeness between a cause and its effect. The very ability to distinguish between cause and effect is based on some observed difference between the two. In the absence of the perception of difference the notion itself collapses. Ordinary causal discussion depends on it, and Śaṅkara sees this common fact as relevant to the question of the causality of Brahman. The analogy he uses is meant to be an illustrative instance of the point he is trying to make.

The objection to it is that in the case of all the terms in the analogy (i.e. men, hair, nails, scorpions, cowdung) there is shared at least one typical and important feature, the quality of materiality. It may be pointed out that the body of man causes the growth of nails etc., and the cowdung is the material cause of the body of the scorpion. So it is really a case of like coming from like. There is a continuity of feature between the pairs of terms in the analogy, while there is a hiatus between Brahman and the world.

Śaṅkara perseveres with his illustration and urges that there is nonetheless a con-

siderable difference between the types of materiality given in the analogy. This is the difference between matter which forms the essential material substratum of sentient creatures, and matter which is not so connected. The examples in the analogy illustrate the passing over of the one type into the other.

Allowing for the fact of a measure of similarity between the terms in the examples, i.e. materiality, Śaṅkara claims there is also a measure of similarity between Brahman and the world, i.e. both have the character of existence.

Since the present objection to the material causality of Brahman is based on the ground of difference between It and the world, Śaṅkara questions just what is meant by such difference. Is its assertion based on the absence of every characteristic of the cause in the effect, the absence of *any* common character between the two, or the absence of consciousness in the case of the effect? If the first then the basis for any causal relation in general is removed. As for the second, there *is* a presence of at least one common characteristic, i.e. existence. As for the third point, Śaṅkara claims that no such instance can be brought forward to disprove the material causality of Brahman.

We have thus far dealt with Śaṅkara's attempt to defend as reasonable the postulate of the world originating from Brahman. He admits another kind of challenge. If the non-dual Brahman as described in Advaita philosophy is the cause of the world, which is multifarious, full of diverse objects and pleasurable and painful experiences, then, when it (the world) is resolved back into its cause (*Brahma-Sūtra*, I.i.2) the latter will be sullied by the reabsorption. Brahman, the transcendent spirit, will be despoiled of its non-duality and perfection. It will be noticed that this amounts to another form of the

previous objection, where it is argued that if Brahman is accepted as the cause of the world belief in Satkāryavāda must be dropped. The objection behind both is the hiatus between Brahman and the world.

Śaṅkara this time throws back the challenge by what seems to be a linguistic sally, claiming that the objector cannot produce any known example to prove his argument, that the effect (the world) will retain its peculiar characteristics following reabsorption into its cause (Brahman). There is no instance in experience of an effect retaining its peculiar characteristics after its reabsorption into its cause. It involves a contradiction in terms, for by reabsorption is meant the loss of the individuality of the effect upon its merging into the cause. On the other hand, there *are* instances supporting the view that effects can be reabsorbed into their causes without imparting to the latter their peculiar properties. For example, gold ornaments do not impart their respective shapes and sizes to the simple mass to which they are reduced upon being melted.

But Śaṅkara and his opponent may be on some common ground here. His disputant might not deny the truth of such an example. What he might well deny is that such an instance is illustrative of the case between Brahman and the world.

Śaṅkara introduces another analogy which this time approximates much more closely to the real substance of his philosophy. He cites the example of the magician who is quite unaffected by the illusions he creates. Analogously this world is but an appearance subsisting in Brahman, which latter is entirely unaffected by it. This is how Śaṅkara really meets the earlier objections. The problem as to how the world could have come from Brahman, and how it could ultimately be resolved back into its cause without prejudicing the non-duality and spirituality of the latter, is answered by the assertion that there never has *in reality* been any difference between Brahman and the world. His point is that if the Advaitic position is accepted these difficulties of genesis and dissolution become superfluous.

INDIANS IN FIJI

PROFESSOR SUDHANSU BIMAL MOOKHERJI

Fiji, a cluster of more or less two hundred and fifty islands, is a part of Melanesia in the South Pacific Ocean. It has been a British Crown Colony since 1874 when it was ceded to the British Crown by Cakobau (pronounced Thakombau) and other Fijian chiefs. Fiji had an estimated total population of 452, 463, in 1966 of which an approximate 254, 706 or 52.07 per cent were Indians. The Indians outnumbered the indigenous Fijians for the first time in 1945 and their numerical

superiority has been more and more marked ever since.

The first Indians to reach the Fijian shore were humble men and women. An unkind Providence, grinding poverty at home, a callous and unsympathetic alien government and capitalist greed of gain had joined hands to force them out of their native shore. They had migrated in search of livelihood to a distant and strange land where they had to work on the plantations under the accursed inden-

ture system. Under the system a labourer had to contract himself into near slavery for a certain number of years on fixed wages. An indentured labourer was guaranteed repatriation with his family at the expense of his employer and the Government of Fiji after ten years in that country—five years as an indentured labourer and five years as a free labourer.

The first batch of indentured Indian labourers arrived in Fiji about ninety years ago in 1879. Between that year and 1916 when Indian migration to Fiji was banned by the Government of India some sixty-two thousand Indians migrated to Fiji. In addition 'free' Indians from Mauritius, Guinea, Trinidad and other places migrated to Fiji and took up land, mostly sugar land.

Indentured labourers, entitled to free repatriation after ten years in Fiji as they were, did not take advantage of it in many cases. Only about fifty per cent of those introduced under indenture decided to return to India. The rest stayed back and settled down permanently in Fiji. Most of those who came back to India returned to Fiji before long where they are now domiciled. At least ninety-two per cent of Fiji's Indian settlers in 1960 were born in that colony. The remaining eight per cent though born in India, were away from the mother-land so long that they had lost all contacts there.

The abolition of the indenture system in 1916 created a serious labour shortage not only in the mills and plantations of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company (referred to as the C.S.R. hereafter) which holds not only the monopoly of sugar production in Fiji but also on all European plantations in the colony. [The Colonial Sugar Refining Company of Sydney, Australia (the C.S.R. in brief), purchased land on the Rewa river on Viti Levu, the largest island of Fijian archipelago, in 1880 and began

to clear it for sugar cultivation with the help of 'Polynesian' labour, changing over later on to indentured Indian labour. It purchased more lands in other places in Fiji later on and owns today 75,091 acres most of which is leased to Indian cane-farmers. It built or acquired from previous owners all the sugar mills operating in Fiji and has been the only producer of sugar in Fiji since 1926. The Company has today four mills, viz, those at Ba, Lautoka and Vaileka on Viti Levu and Labasa on Vanua Levu, the second largest island of the Fijian archipelago. The Company's mill at Nausori on Viti Levu was closed down at the end of the 1959 crushing season.] Labour shortage forced many European planters out of business. The difficulty was overcome by the C.S.R. establishment of Indians as sugar-growers. To all intents and purposes they monopolized sugar growing in Fiji between 1920 and 1930. To obtain cheap supplies of sugarcane for its mills had been a major problem of the C.S.R. for decades. A satisfactory solution thereof was in sight at long last.

Fijian sugar-farmers, mostly Indians, are either tenants of the C.S.R. or lessees of land leased from indigenous Fijian proprietors. Cane-growers other than the tenants of the C.S.R. are locally known as 'contractors'. The tenants of the C.S.R., who constitute about forty per cent of the total cane-growers in Fiji, hold tenancy agreements for twenty years beginning from 1953 with a right of renewal for a further period of twenty-one years. Rentals are subject to 'review and reassessment' after every ten years 'but may not exceed six per cent of the unimproved capital value of the land'. The tenant cannot alienate his land nor any part thereof without the written approval of the C.S.R. Sub-division and fragmentation are thus effectively guarded against.

Indians have fitted admirably into the Fijian economy. They are industrious and careful agriculturists and quiet and law-abiding citizens. They supply sugarcane to the C.S.R. at a price which makes it possible for the latter to sell its sugar profitably in the competitive world market. The price given to the Indian grower, it must be noted, is rather low and the profits of the C.S.R. are earned literally by the sweat of the Indian brow.

On the whole, Indians have done well in Fiji. Many of them have become tenant-farmers or lessees of land. Very few among them are, however, peasant-proprietors. Yet their position today is much better than that of the ill-paid, ill-fed, ill-housed and ill-treated indentured labourers that the fathers and grandfathers of most of them were. Indians grow not only sugarcane for the C.S.R., but provide most of the labour in its mills of which there are four. In 1943 they grew sugarcane on about fifty thousand acres of land, paddy on ten thousand acres, cotton on about two thousand acres and corn on about two thousand acres. A majority of workers in the Fijian sugar industry—on the farms as well as in the mills—are of Indian origin. Certain trades and occupations are almost exclusively in the hands of Indian settlers. Taxi cab drivers, tailors and boot makers are almost all Indian settlers. They are to be found in most of the other trades as well. Many of them are mixed or dairy-farmers. They are also to be found in business, in the professions and in government services.

Indian settlers in Fiji 'are showing the effects of a more favourable environment and better living conditions and are becoming physically larger, healthier and stronger'. About eighty-four per cent of them are Hindus. About thirteen per cent are Muslims. Sikhs and Christians

account for the rest. (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. IX, 1951, p. 231)

A majority of the Indian population of Fiji had their original homes in the plains of the Gaṅgā and are from the Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Bengal and Orissa. Some had their homes in Southern India and are Tamils, Telugus, Malayalis, Kanarese and Moplahs. Those from Central India and Western India are very few in number. Men from Punjab and Gujarat migrated to Fiji in the post-indenture years. Indians from Bombay and the Eastern Punjab were attracted to Fiji by higher wages and more favourable economic conditions than those at home.

According to one estimate, the places of origin of Fiji's Indian settlers in 1935 were as follows :

1. The Uttar Pradesh and the Central Provinces	..	54,600
2. Southern India	..	25,500
3. The Punjab	..	3,000
4. Gujarat	..	2,500
5. Unknown	..	800

(*Vide*, J. W. Coulter : *Fiji : Little India of the Pacific*, pp. 79ff.)

There has been practically no inter-marriage between Indians and other races in Fiji. Relations between the Indians and the indigenous Fijians, the children of the soil, were remarkably harmonious in the past. But signs of deterioration of Indo-Fijian relations are already discernible and Fiji's inter-racial relations may deteriorate still further in the not very remote future. [... 'relations between the two races appear at present to be remarkably good. Indians and Fijians work together, in the Civil Service, the Police and in other walks of life, with apparent harmony and little friction. There is, however, some danger that Indian land hunger, and the Fijian determination to retain their land, may break down this harmony, and lead to the

widening of the gulf that now exists between the races. The gulf is due not only to ethnic, religious and linguistic differences, but to different customs and habits and specially to the different sense of values as between the races. The Indian is an individualist while the Fijian has been accustomed in the past to a community life which even today, in spite of some restiveness among the younger generation, governs the mentality of the race.

'The descendants of the Indian indentured labourers . . . are hard workers, acquisitive of land and money; the Fijians accustomed to a communal system which shields them from the direct effects of poverty, are generally disinclined to excessive labour and are careless and easy going with money. The Fijian is loyal to the British Crown and to the British connexion, and has unfortunately been given the opportunity to compare unfavourably the behaviour of Indians in Fiji during the last war (World War II, 1939-45) with the loyal and gallant conduct of the Fijian battalions . . . This was brought to our attention by a large number of Fijian witnesses'. (Burns Report, p. 10)]

Fijian leaders are against any mingling of the races, politically, socially or educationally. Governor Sir Kenneth Maddocks once told the Fiji Legislative Council that it was uneconomic and inconvenient for Fijian children to walk long distances to the nearest Fijian primary school when there was an Indian school near their homes or for Indian children to travel equally far to an Indian school while there was a Fijian school within comparatively easy reach. Racial schools he rightly pointed out, consolidated and intensified differences and prevented mutual understanding, which would naturally follow working, playing and growing up together. Indians welcomed the statement. Fijian

leaders, on the other hand, referred unfavourably to it. (*Vide*, Sir Alan Burns: *Fiji*, pp. 229-30)

Fijians are particularly worried about their land and fear that they may be dispossessed of it and are not reassured despite assurances by the government, the opinions of the Burns Commission, which submitted its report in February 1960, and the unequivocal statements of Indian politicians. Thus Mr. A.I.N. Deoki, an Indian member of the Fiji Legislative Council, told the Council in December 1960 that 'the Indian community recognized the fact that the Fijian people are the owners of the land and the Indian community does not wish in any way to disturb their ownership'. Another Indian member, Mr. B. D. Lakshman declared on the floor of the said Council (December 1960) that 'no responsible Indian had ever cherished that there was any doubt or any question about the ownership of the Fijian land'.

The Indian community has certainly legitimate grievances against the colonial government. For one thing, it is not adequately represented in the Colony's Legislative and Executive Councils and in government services. For another, separate electorates for European and Indian settlers have been a divisive factor between the communities concerned. For yet a third, literary test for Indians—there is none for Europeans—has restricted Indian franchise drastically.

But by far the most serious grievance of the Indians is that though most of them belong to the peasant stock, though Indian farmers are among the most industrious in the world and though the settlers of Indian origin have made invaluable contribution to the economy and prosperity of Fiji, they have very little land to call their own in the land of their adoption. Thus in 1956, 169,403 Indians, who formed

forty-nine per cent of the total population of Fiji in that year, had only 75,830 acres of land, which is a paltry 1.7 per cent of the total arable land in Fiji. Indians, it is true, cultivate a very large proportion of the total available acreage in Fiji. (In 1959-60, Indians farmed 220,000 acres of land in the cane-belt and 128,000 acres in

other areas. The cane-belt, it should be noted, is the most fertile region in Fiji.) But they are only tenants or lessees and the renewal of leases has become increasingly difficult in recent years. There are allegations of subtle anti-Indian propaganda by interested parties. *Divide et impera* seems to be in action.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS NUMBER

The article 'When to Write and When not to Write', written by Mr. Ernest Briggs of Brisbane, Australia, describes that there is a law of periodicity which every writer has to learn for creative literary work.

With deep sorrow we note that Mr. Ernest Briggs who was a regular contributor of thoughtful articles and poems to the columns of *Prabuddha Bharata* for the last few years, suddenly passed away in June 1967. Our readers will remember him long for his rich literary contributions which he made available to this journal at different times.

Professor M. K. Venkatarama Iyer M.A., formerly Head of the Department of Philosophy in the Annamalai University is quite well-known to our readers. He presents here another article entitled 'Sarva-Mukti' in which he distinguishes the views of Śaṅkara on the subject from those of others.

Professor Benoy Gopal Ray M.A., Griffith Prize-man (Calcutta University) is the Professor of Comparative Religion in the Visva-Bharati University, Shantinike-

tan, West Bengal. He has been teaching Philosophy and Religion to University students for the last thirty years and is the author of a good number of books on Indian and Western Philosophies. His treatises on *The Philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore*, *The Philosophy of Bosanquet*, *Contemporary Indian Philosophies*, *Gandhian Ethics* and *Religious Movements of Modern Bengal* are particularly mentionable. Professor Ray's present article 'On the Methodology of Comparative Religion' is a short review on the subject.

The philosophy of Śaṅkara has universal appeal. Mr. Max Nolan of Bayswater, Perth, Western Australia sets forth here the first section of his study on 'Śaṅkara and the Causal Concept'.

Professor Sudhansu Bimal Mookherji, M.A., is the Head of the Department of History, Surendranath College (formerly Ripon College), Calcutta. In his short article 'Indians in Fiji' Professor Mookherji surveys some of the economic and political problems which the Indian settlers in Fiji face today.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

ENGLISH

THE MYSTIC IN LOVE. (A TREASURY OF WORLD MYSTICAL POETRY) EDITED BY SHELLEY GROSS. The Citadel Press, New York. 1966. Pages 219. Price \$ 4.95.

Any philosophical enquiry, to be acceptable, must not only convince us intellectually, but must be capable of being experienced. The speculative systems of India have therefore always insisted on the necessity of a spiritual experience. Some thinkers have asserted that a philosophical system finds its culmination and proof only in experience (*anubhava, darśana*). Such an experience has been communicated to us by persons whom the layman calls mystics. Long back William James tried to show the lack of unanimity among the mystics about their revelations of spiritual Reality. But since then students of mysticism have been systematically correcting the findings of thinkers like James.

Shelley Gross presents in this handsome volume a collection of one hundred and forty-six poems from nearly forty-two poet-mystics. The poems are arranged in seven sections. Starting with the 'wings of humility' we are led into 'the soul aflame'. Then the 'veil' gets lifted, followed by an 'intellectual fire' and a 'divine ecstasy'. Once the 'light of the soul' dawns, there is 'the joy of surrender'. In these stages we find the so called poetic ideas of truth, goodness, love, and beauty, which are spiritual facts. The awareness of these facts invests the tone of the mystic with a profound sincerity. But the facts are such as to enable one to argue that every person is a mystic and that the religious consciousness is, as Swami Vivekananda said, 'the unfoldment of the divinity already in man'. In other words, the mystic's urge to know his true being is a natural one, and his goal is one of unity or identity with the Real. To realize this goal he struggles hard; and in this struggle is seen the intense practicality of the mystic.

The poems selected come from different lands and religions. The poets of the seventeenth and the nineteenth centuries are excluded in favour of the mystics who were also poets. In spite of certain differences among the mystics, there is a broad agreement, as the editor notes. This agreement appears in the principle of love which unites the mystic to his Reality. Since poetry is the perfect medium of expressing the ineffable, she has

selected the poems of the mystics, thereby emphasizing the unity of all higher religious experiences.

The present anthology deserves to be read by one and all. Those who believe in the mystic way will be further impelled to pursue the path. The sceptics are bound to think seriously over such lines as those of Lalleswari:

I have solved the Riddle of the Dream,

Where we twain do as are Self Consort.

and as they enquire, they will be compelled to accept the truth in the lines from Swami Vivekananda,

Who loves all beings, without distinction,

He indeed is worshipping best his God.

The Mystic in love is a much needed companion to every one interested in the human and spiritual values.

DR. P. S. SASTRI

BENGALI

ŚRĪ MA DARŚANA (PART IV). BY SWAMI NITYATMANANDA. General Printers and Publishers Pvt. Ltd., Calcutta. 1966-67 (Bengali era 1373). Pages 327. Price Rs. 5.

Already three parts of this book have been published and well received. This is the fourth part, noting the events from the 15th September, 1923 to the 27th May, 1924. In it there are many important and instructive discourses on Sri Ramakrishna and Śrī Sarada Devi, important and illuminating discussions on the Bible, *Korān* *ṣarīf*, *Gītā*, and Upaniṣads, deep and sagacious sayings of Swami Abhedananda and other matters of deeply philosophical and ethical nature.

In the sixteen chapters we have here a sound code of ethical life. Familiar domestic incidents connected with the lives of the devotees are depicted in a simple and terse manner and the instructions implied in them are full of wisdom that can never be so effectively imparted in books of abstruse philosophy.

Mahendra Nath Gupta, popularly known as 'Sri Ma', the great devotee and disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, maintained a diary of the immortal sayings of the Master. In the present age of general moral degradation and human suffering, the sayings of Sri Ramakrishna as retold by 'Sri Ma' and published by Swami Nityatmananda are very useful and instructive guide to deluded humanity and shall act as a torch-bearer,

Some minor mistakes like printing 'Fourth Chapter' twice, once on page 61 and again on page 86 (instead of Fifth Chapter) should be avoided in future editions.

DR. P. N. MUKHERJEE

SRI VIṢṆU SAHASRANAMAM (WITH THE COMMENTARIES OF ŚRĪ ŚANKARACARYA AND ŚRĪ PARASARA BHATTAM). TRANSLATED BY K. E. PARTHASARATHY. Ganesh & Co., (Madras) Private Ltd. 1966. Pages 363. Price Rs. 12.

One of the forms of worship known to the Hindu and practised by him is the repetition of the name or names of his God. These names being synonymous, they tend to promote the concentration of the person on the reality of his personal God. Such names are strung together in the form of verses. Most of the deities have these hymns of adoration containing a thousand names. The number thousand (*sahasra*) is both a fixed numeral and an unlimited number. Of the available *sahasranāmas* the most popular are *Lalitā-sahasranāma* and *Viṣṇu-sahasranāma*.

The *Viṣṇusahasranāma* has been commented upon by Śrī Śaṅkara and also by Śrī Parāśara, representing Advaita and Viśiṣṭādvaita respectively. This *stotra* is an integral part of the *Mahābhārata*, *Ānuśāsanika Parvan*. Mr. Parthasarathy has in the present work given each name in the sanskrit script, transliterated it, and interpreted it according to the two commentators. It would have been better if the editor-translator had given the original one hundred and forty-two verses as well. The commentaries are not given, but their substance is presented systematically.

The names of God are said to be *gaṇa*: they are suggestive and symbolic. The word *gaṇa* does not mean that they are based on *guṇas* or attributes. It is necessary to know the names and what they mean. But it is more essential to know the names correctly since each name as symbolic is identical with what it symbolizes. But the editor disappoints us here. There are too many faulty spellings: Bhagabadguna (9), Śahasra (10), bahuda (25), dyayan (26), Virshtanoḥ (29), Mandukhya (283), Sabhari (32), Thiagaraja (32), Duhcāsana (33) and the like are plenty. In the

body of the text one sadly finds a number of mis-spelt words like those on pages 54, 55, and 56. Even the *sahasranāmas* are not free from *apabhramśas*. (pages 78, 311, and 329) Even the transliteration of the names is faulty. We may refer to pages 69, 77, 106, 142, 145, 271. On page 121 we find *mahādrīdhṛk* transliterated as *mahādrīhṛk*, while the name ought to be *mahādrīdhṛt*. On page 237 there is a mention of *Ratantara* (?). The grammatical correctness does not appear on some pages.

The book needs a careful revision. A hymn of praise containing the holy names of gods must be absolutely correct. Patañjali, we may remember, argued that grammar should be studied so that we can avoid *apabhramśa*: '*nāpabhāṣitavai*'. The reciting of a mis-spelt word may bring harm. One may handle this book *only if* he has a knowledge of Sanskrit.

DR. P. S. SASTRI

SADHANĀ. BY SWAMI SIVANANDA. The Divine Life Society, Tehrigarwal, U.P. 1967. Pages 719 (with five Appendices). Price Rs. 12.

Born in 1887 in South India Swami Sivananda settled down in Rishikesh in 1924 symbolizing the fundamental unity of the North and the South. An indefatigable worker, the Swami organized the Sivananda Ashrama, the Divine Life Society and the Yoga-Vedānta Forest Academy and wrote over two hundred volumes. After serving the cause of religion and humanity for about four decades he passed away in 1963.

Sādhana contains the gist of the Swami's teachings and advice regarding 'techniques' for 'spiritual perfection'. In twenty-two chapters and five appendices the essence of the Swami's sermons concerning *sādhana* is well stated.

It is a valuable guide to all aspirants of truth and noble life, being the precepts of a man who lived a dedicated life and was indeed very competent to undertake this task. The only thing uncomfortable about this book is its volume. We recommend this valuable book to all aspirants of truth and moral life.

DR. P. N. MUKHERJEE

NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAMA NARENDRAPUR

REPORT FOR THE YEARS 1963-66

This branch of the Ramakrishna Mission is an important institution engaged in various types of community development activities with special emphasis on education and training since 1957. Originally it was started in North Calcutta, after the Bengal famine of 1943 on a small scale to serve as a Home for poor and orphan boys. During the period under review all its departments continued to function efficiently. The various activities were as follows:

Students' Home: During the close of the period there were 400 boys getting help from the Ashrama in various forms according to their needs. Most of the boys came from displaced families or were members of backward classes, physically disabled or otherwise handicapped and unfortunate.

College: In this residential Three-Year Degree college there were 260 students at the end of the period, all studying in Honours course. The percentages of success in the University examinations during the years 1962-63, 1963-64, and 1964-65 were 86, 90 and 97 respectively. In the last session one boy of Chemistry Honours stood first in the University.

Multipurpose School: This is a residential school with as many as six streams and two separate wings for Bengali and English mediums of instructions. There were 391, 380 and 448 students studying during the years 1963, 1964 and 1965 respectively. In 1963, 66 out of 71 passed in the Higher Secondary examination. In 1964 and 1965 there were cent percent successes. Every year some boys occupied positions in the examination. The workshop attached to the school provided fine opportunity to the boys to get technical skill.

Senior Basic School: This is another residential school having three classes, classes VI, VII and VIII. It had 250 boys at the end of 1966.

Technical Education: The local young men were provided with opportunities to learn Poultry-keeping, Dairying, Tailoring, Book-keeping, Carpentry and other crafts and trades. There were nearly 30 students getting training in shorthand and typewriting. A junior Technical School is going to be started soon.

Central Library: The number of books in the library was 35,082 at the end of the period under

review. It received 59 journals. Besides teachers and students of the Ashrama, on an average 200 readers visited the library daily. There were 1799 members on the roll.

Blind boys' Academy: This is one of the important activities of the Ashrama. The strength of the boys in this Academy has increased to 90 from 15 in 1957 and the management proposes to accommodate 150 when the necessary building and other programmes are completed. Every blind boy after studying up to class VIII can choose any one of the courses of study according to his ability, such as general education upto the post-graduate level, music, handicrafts and light engineering. There is a Braille library with 5000 volumes. Adequate steps have been taken to rehabilitate the trained blind boys and also to train proper teachers for the blind.

The boys of the different institutions, numbering 1184, staying in the campus were provided with enough opportunities to develop their personalities through games and sports, social service camps, manual labour programmes, relief work, seminars, symposia etc., occasional educational tours and celebrations and festivals.

Vivekananda Social Welfare Centre: As part of Harijan welfare programme, this centre continued to serve nearly 250 families with a total population of 2000 in the slum area called Rambagan in North Calcutta. It ran two junior basic schools and two pre-basic schools for the students of the area numbering 442. Nearly 70 trainees received training in various crafts such as painting, weaving etc which helped them to improve their, socio-economic condition. The adult education centres for men and women, Harijan students' Home and tiffin project for the boys under its management continued to function well. The free dispensary treated nearly 15,670 patients annually. The average annual expenditure of this centre stood at Rs. 1,40,000 and it was met from the grants of the Central Government, State Government and the Central Social Welfare Board and from the donations of the generous public. Sometimes loans had to be taken to bridge the gulf between the income and expenditure.

Institute of Social Education and Recreation: This institution, during these years also as usual, was engaged in rural uplift work, youth leadership training and mass education programmes in large areas of the districts of 24 Parganas and Midnapore. Besides the publication of the monthly

magazine *Samāj Śikṣā*, some small booklets had also been brought out by this institute.

Child Welfare: UNICEF milk powder (of 104727 lb. bulk) was distributed in 1964-65 to 5169 children and 1239 expectant mothers. Measures are being taken to give more attention to the health, diet and recreation of the children of the needy families in rural area.

The Ashrama also conducted migrants relief work in Assam and border areas of W. Bengal, in 1964.

While mentioning special debts of gratitude to Government and the friends for thier generous help to the Ashrama, the management appeals for funds to accomplish its projects connected with the Blind Boys Academy and Harijan Welfare Centres.

RAMAKRISHNA VEDANTA CENTRE OF SEATTLE, U. S. A.

DEDICATION SERVICES (JULY 7 to 9, 1967)

The dedication of the Centre's meditation room, designated Brahmananda Hall, remodelled and furnished in memory of Swami Brahmananda, Sri Ramakrishna's spiritual son and the head of the Order for a quarter of a century, came off nicely.

The remodelling of Brahmananda Hall consisted of the installation of acoustic tiles and fluorescence lights on the ceiling with an additional spotlight that focuses on the altar. This spotlight especially illumines the pictures of Sri Ramakrishna, Buddha and Christ, as well as the mystic symbol *Om* mounted on a uniquely designed stand. A special altar with a statue of Swami Brahmananda in meditation has been placed near the main altar. Palms and beautiful flowers were placed on both altars. New wall-to-wall carpet has been laid on the floor, new drapes provided for the windows, and appropriate pictures have been hung on the walls.

The hallway to the meditation room has also been remodelled consisting of installation of acoustic tiles on the ceiling, three new attractive ceiling lights and laying carpet, similar to that in

Brahmananda Hall, on the floor and the staircase to the main floor. The dedication began with a devotional service held on Friday evening at 6.30 in the Brahmananda Hall. The room was filled to capacity. Several persons sat on the floor and on extra chairs in the hallway. Swami Vividishananda briefly welcomed the guests, announced the occasion and introduced the speaker, Swami Aseshananda of the Vedanta Society of Portland, Oregon. In his announcement of the occasion, Swami Vividishananda stated that the meditation room will be available to members and friends of the Centre who may wish to meditate there at times other than class nights. He also commented that he felt this would surely gladden the hearts of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Brahmananda both of whom emphasized silence and meditation. Following the chants by the two Swamis and devotional songs by the congregation, Swami Aseshananda gave an inspiring talk delineating some of the essential characteristics of the saintly personality of Swami Brahmananda and narrated some of his personal reminiscences of him. Swami Vividishananda also gave some of his personal reminiscences of Swami Brahmananda.

Following the dedication service a banquet was served in the chapel. Nine tables were beautifully decorated with yellow candles and flowers. The dinner included several Hindu dishes prepared by the devotees, with the help of Swami Vividishananda, which were immensely enjoyed. During the course of the dinner Swami Aseshananda chanted a chapter from the *Bhagavad-Gītā* in Sanskrit and gave the substance in English.

The second item of the programme was an informal reception held on Saturday evening which included the showing of some very interesting coloured slides on India and Thailand followed by singing of hymns and serving of refreshments. The last and most important feature of the dedication programme was the public meeting held in the chapel Sunday morning, July 9th, at 11.00. Swami Aseshananda was the guest speaker. He gave a very inspiring talk, his subject being 'Awakening of Spiritual Consciousness'.